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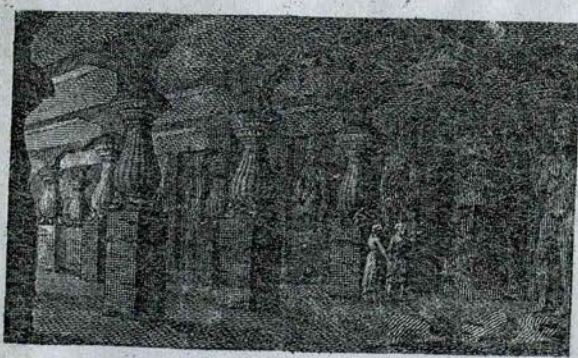
RARE
S K E T C H E S

CHIEFLY RELATING TO THE
HISTORY, RELIGION, LEARNING,
AND MANNERS,
OF THE
H I N D O O S.

WITH
A concise Account of the PRESENT STATE of the
NATIVE POWERS of HINDOSTAN.

THE SECOND EDITION, ENLARGED.
IN TWO VOLUMES.
VOL. I.

Q. Crawford.



Sketches relating to the History, Religion, Learning and Manners
the Hindoos. Vol. 1.

L O N D O N:
PRINTED FOR T. CADELL, IN THE STRAND.
MDCCXCH.

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INDIA

OF THE

INDIA

A Concise Account of the History of the
Native People of India

THE SECOND PART

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOLUME

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INDIA

PRINTED FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

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IT is not my intention in the following sheets, to add to the number of authors who have devoted their labours to the history of the conquerors of Hindostan ; but to draw the attention of the Public, for a moment, from the exploits of Mahomedans and Europeans, and direct it to the original inhabitants of that country. If this attempt should lead to further inquiry upon so interesting a subject, or be productive of any pleasure or information to the Reader, I shall think my pains well bestowed, as my wishes will be accomplished.

THE AUTHOR.

N. B. *In reading the names of persons and places, the vowels are understood to be pronounced as in Italian.*



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 *The Vignette in the Title-page is a View
in the subterraneous Temple in the Island
of Elephanta.*



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RARE

C O N T E N T S
OF THE
FIRST VOLUME.

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S K E T C H



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TO THIS

SECOND EDITION.

SINCE the First Edition of this Work was published, I have read in the Second Volume of the Transactions of the Royal Society at Edinburgh, *Remarks on the Astronomy of the Brabmans*, by Mr. Playfair; and in the First Volume of the Asiatic Researches, *Remarks on the Gods of Greece, Italy, and India*, by Sir William Jones. I regret that I had not seen these works in time to have made that use of them in the First Edition, which I have taken the liberty of doing in this.

From the materials furnished by Monsieur le Gentil and Monsieur Bailly, Mr. Playfair has even gone beyond those authors, in establishing, by scientific proof, the originality



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ginality of the Hindoo astronomy, and its superior antiquity to any other that is known ; while Sir William Jones has made great progress to shew, that the mythology of the Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans, derived its origin from the fertile imaginations of the Hindoos.

The Edition I now offer to the Public was already prepared for the press, and given into the hands of a friend to read, when I was informed, that an Historical Disquisition concerning India, by Dr. Robertson, would soon be published. The name of a man so eminent in the literary world, naturally made me anxious to see this work, and easily induced me to suspend the publication of my own. It is needless to say how much I was flattered by the notice Dr. Robertson has taken of the *SKETCHES CONCERNING HINDOSTAN*. But, after due consideration, I thought it best to suffer this Edition to go to the press *exactly* such



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such as it was previous to my perusal of the Disquisition of the elegant Historian, and to reserve to myself the liberty of making such remarks upon it in the Notes, as might appear necessary.

An apology is certainly due from me to the Purchasers of the First Edition, for not having the new matter, that is introduced into the Second, printed separately, for their accommodation : and I cannot help expressing my regret that this was rendered impossible, by the necessity of intermixing the greatest part of it with what was already published.

The most considerable Additions have been made in the First Sketch, on the History and Religion of Mankind ; in the Seventh, on the Mythology ; and in the Eleventh, on the Astronomy of the Brahmans. The Thirteenth and Fourteenth Sketches are entirely new. For the account of the Manners



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ners and Religion of Thibet, which appears in the Thirteenth Sketch, I am indebted to the kindness of Robert Bogle Esquire, who, in the politest manner, permitted me to make what use I pleased of the interesting manuscripts of his brother, the late Mr. James Bogle. I thought it, however, my duty to restrain my inclination to communicate the whole to the Public, and have inserted only such extracts as tended to elucidate the immediate object of my enquiry.

Q. CRAUFURD.

LONDON,
June 12, 1791.



S K E T C H I.

*General Reflections on the History and
Religion of Mankind.*

THERE is perhaps no subject which has given rise to more speculative inquiry, than the formation of the earth, and the origin of the human race: still the most ingenious systems are, in reality, but *philosophical romances*; they have never risen above probable conjecture, unsubstantiated by proof. In few instances we can trace the period when even those nations were formed, who, in their progress or their

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decline,



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decline, have filled an important place in history ; while the origin of the greatest part of the inhabitants of the earth is entirely hid in obscurity. Inquiry has in vain attempted to ascertain from whence the innumerable tribes and powerful nations came, that were found established in the western hemisphere ; to find out who gave inhabitants to the many detached islands discovered in ancient and modern times ; and to account for the difference of features, of complexion, and of hair, existing between the European, the Hindoo, the Caffer, and the American.

We are told that Manco Capac civilized a tribe of wild Peruvians, which afterwards became a numerous and happy nation ; that this nation was subdued, its princes and nobles destroyed, its people massacred, with the ferocity of beasts of prey, by men who professed a religion, the chief characteristic



GENERAL REFLECTIONS. 3

teristic of whose doctrines is meekness and humanity *.

Perhaps the origin of all nations, though their subsequent history may be different, is similar to that of the Peruvians. A number of persons, by accident or compact, associate and form a tribe; others unite with it, or are compelled to submit to its increasing power: but how the individuals came into the country, is generally a problem which cannot be solved; and though philosophy may attempt to explain, and in the fruitfulness of imagination may find connexions and resemblances, after the most laborious research, we must stop, and rest satisfied with this truth, That the Supreme Being, who created the universe, peopled *our* planet in a manner conformable to his

* The enormities which were then committed, cannot be attributed to the character of the nation, but to the reigning fanaticism of the time, and the avarice of particular leaders.



4 GENERAL REFLECTIONS.

wisdom, though hid from its short-sighted inhabitants.

In endeavouring to trace the rise and progress of religion and laws, of arts and sciences, we are likewise frequently stopped in our inquiries, or led into error, by the gloom that in general hides their first origin. We may sometimes imagine that we have discovered analogies, and may argue in consequence of them, when perhaps no other analogy exists, than that which arises, from those innate faculties and principles which nature has implanted in the mind of man, and are common to every people and climate.

There is no nation, I believe, however barbarous it may be*, nor any individual, whatever for the sake of false celebrity he may

* Though some writers have mentioned nations so barbarous, as to have no idea of a Supreme Being, or of a future existence, yet I am inclined to believe that
this



GENERAL REFLECTIONS. 5

may pretend, who has not a sense, inseparable from his existence, of a supreme ruling power; and this internal evidence of the dependence of the human race upon a superior Being, is a natural and sufficient basis to support a system of religious worship.

this opinion has arisen from a want of sufficient acquaintance with the nations they speak of; as I have myself known many instances, in which an opinion, hastily received, has, upon nearer connexion, been found to be erroneous. An eminent Author, Dr. Robertson, has said, that tribes have been discovered in America who have no idea of a Supreme Being, and no rites of religious worship; but he has afterwards also said, that "the idea of the immortality of the soul can be traced from one extremity of America to the other, and that the most uncivilized of its savage tribes do not apprehend death to be the extinction of being." Garcilasso de la Vega, who was born at Cuzco shortly after its conquest, who was of the family of the Incas, but brought up a Christian, says, that the Peruvians believed in the existence of a Supreme Being, and in a state of rewards and punishments. The same is asserted by many authors with respect to the Mexicans.



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The necessity of established rules for the government of every society or class of people, is so evident, that the rudest tribes must have soon perceived, that they neither could enjoy internal peace and safety without them, nor be in a state to defend themselves against attacks from abroad: and hence the origin of laws and government.

When tribes or societies are formed, and their immediate wants supplied, as men live and communicate with each other, the mode of providing for them is improved; less urgent and nicer wants succeed; thought is exerted; the faculties of the mind unfold, by being employed; talents are awakened, by being called for and encouraged; and nations, from their real and imaginary wants, and exertions to supply them, gradually go on to luxury and to refinement. When the inventions that took their rise from necessity and convenience,



GENERAL REFLECTIONS. 7

nience, have been carried so far, as to leave genius at leisure to gratify itself with subjects of curiosity and amusement, it takes a more exalted course; the liberal arts follow, and proceed on towards perfection; until some of those revolutions to which nations are subject, arrest their progress, and again bury them in oblivion. Such was their fate in Egypt, in Greece, and in Italy.

All the religions we are acquainted with, lay claim to a divine origin: all that are found established in civilized nations, ordain the adoration of God, and, with little other variation, than such as may depend on climate or local circumstances, inculcate such duties of morality, as tend to preserve order in society, and procure happiness to the individual. It might be expected, that an institution in its nature so sacred, and so evidently necessary to the peace and welfare of mankind, would be less liable than any

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other



8 GENERAL REFLECTIONS.

other to perversion or abuse : but though nothing can more strongly evince the dominion of our passions over our reason, we every where find that religion has, more or less, been made subservient to their gratification, and employed to impose on the credulous multitude. If we see the Brahman in Hindostan using the superstition he has created, to procure to himself and his order certain distinctions and privileges, we have seen the Christian priest doing the same : and, however melancholy the reflection may be, the decline of respect for that religion, which in itself is so pure, may principally be ascribed to the pride and misconduct of its ministers.

The professors of the Christian, the Mahomedan, and the Hindoo religion *, form
by

* There are many reasons which lead us to suppose, that the inhabitants of Pegu, Siam, Thibet, and even
China



GENERAL REFLECTIONS. 9

by far the greatest portion of the inhabitants of the globe. In comparison with the number of the followers of any of these, every other religious denomination, as far as has been hitherto ascertained, may be looked upon as inconsiderable. History has recorded the origin, and marked the progress, of the two former; but the rise of the latter, and the changes it may have undergone, are placed at a period so remote, and we are yet so defective in materials, that it is impossible to follow its steps with the same precision, that may be expected in treating of the others.

The effects of the doctrines of the Khoran are too well known to require a parti-

China and Japan, derived their religion from the same source with the Hindoos. The analogy between the worship of the people of Pegu and Siam, and that of the Hindoos, is so palpably evident, as not to leave any doubt of their common origin. See SKETCH XIII, &c.

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10 GENERAL REFLECTIONS.

cular discussion. They were delivered to an unenlightened people, by a daring and artful man, who profanely affected to have an intercourse with the Deity, and to be particularly selected by him to convey his will to mankind. He supported this fabulous revelation with pretended visions and miracles, which, though despised by us for their grossness and absurdity, operated with great effect on the more ignorant Arabians. He commanded belief, punished disobedience, and every faithful Mussulman thought it a pious duty to subdue those by the sword, who refused to embrace his religion. The leaders of the early Mahomedans, being active and intrepid warriors, at the head of a hardy race of men, whom they had inspired with fanatic courage, like a torrent bore down all who attempted to oppose them, and in an astonishingly short space of time carried their dominion and their faith into every quarter of the then known world.

Science,



GENERAL REFLECTIONS. II

Science, as far as the Mahomedan religion spread, felt its baneful influence; and still wherever we find the banner of the crescent raised, we see it followed by an enslaved, ignorant, and bigotted race of men, whose history, excepting where it is faintly enlightened by a few Arabian writers, creeps through one continued gloom of cherished barbarism.

At a time when the Roman empire was at the summit of its power, when learning and the arts were admired and encouraged, and the worship of the gods in its utmost splendor, the Christian religion was ushered into the world in a remote and inconsiderable province, under the mildest and most humble aspect.

Those who were chosen to promulgate it to mankind, were taken from the lowest classes of a people, who had scarcely excited the attention of their more polished conquerors, by any thing but their turbulence
and



12 GENERAL REFLECTIONS.

and obstinacy. The Apostles, now so justly held in high veneration by us, then unknown and undistinguished, except within the humble sphere of their Christian converts, were, with their opinions, little noticed, and are but barely mentioned by the writers of those times *. At first, they seem

* It appears, that the Christians, till the reign of Trajan, had been so little noticed, that no law had been established for their trial or punishment. When Pliny was governor of Pontus, he applied to his friend and master for instructions how to proceed against them. The letter is curious, and the answer contains sentiments of justice that do honour to the great man who wrote it. They are the 97th and 98th in the collection of Pliny's correspondence.

Tacitus mentions the Christians as having been accused of setting fire to Rome in the reign of Nero. He says, "Ergo abolendo rumori Nero subdidit reos, et quæsitissimis pœnis affecit, quos per flagitia invidiosos, vulgus Christianos appellabat."—And, after having recounted the excruciating tortures by which many of that religion were put to death, he proceeds,—"Ergo quam adversus fontes, et novissima exempla meritos, miseratio oriebatur, tanquam non utilitate publica, fed in sævitiam unius absumerentur." See Tacit. Ann. Lib. XV.

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GENERAL REFLECTIONS. 13

to have been imprisoned and punished by the magistrates, as men who, according to the then prevailing notions, were blasphemers of the gods. Equally exposed to the aversion of their countrymen and their conquerors, no teachers of any new religion ever began their mission with less apparent probability of success. But, by their confidence in him they worshipped, and their unremitting perseverance, they gradually gained admittance among all ranks of men, from the cottage to the palace. Then, enemies to pride and violence, with the language of persuasion, they taught duties that were agreeable to the soundest principles of morality; they recommended obedience, rather than opposition, to the established government; and by these mild means, their doctrines, in little more than three hundred years after the death of Christ, had made so great a progress, that they were embraced by the Roman Emperor himself. The system of heathen mythology,



14 GENERAL REFLECTIONS.

mythology, adorned with all the elegance in its rites that a refined and luxurious people could invent, and which had so much contributed to the perfection of the arts, fell before the gentle but prevailing force of Christianity; and the eagle of Jove, under which the victorious legions had been led, through a series of ages, to unparalleled renown, was changed for the Cross, the symbol of the faith which their fovereign had adopted.

But besides the internal purity of the new doctrine, a variety of combined circumstances contributed to its rapid advancement; and I hope it will not be thought out of place cursorily to notice them.

Mr. Gibbon, in his *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, in following the course of human reasoning, and arguing from apparent causes, has observed, that the writings of Pagan sceptics had prepared



GENERAL REFLECTIONS. 15

prepared the way, and the doctrine of the immortality of the soul principally contributed, to the success of the Christian religion.

An examination of the writings of the ancients on the subject of their theology, will shew that polytheism was almost universally considered, by men of learning, as a fable fabricated to amuse the superstitious multitude, and calculated to maintain the influence and authority of the priesthood. We find that many of the most celebrated philosophers, both before, during, and after the Augustan age, made it the subject of their animadversion: and as Mr. Gibbon very justly remarks, the opinions and examples of men eminent for their rank and learning, must have considerably influenced the opinions of the people. Few men either take the pains, or are possessed of sufficient knowledge, fairly to examine the religion in which they were born; they



18. GENERAL REFLECTIONS.

in general follow it, and believe it preferable to any other, from habit and education. But when it was known, that those who held the highest ranks in the state, and who, in consequence thereof, even officiated in the priesthood, in their hearts despised those ceremonies which they performed with apparent solemnity; and made devotion, and the devout, the objects of their wit and ridicule; others, from vanity, or deference to their judgment, imitated their example; respect for religion was gradually undermined; and the prejudice of education being removed, the mind, left without any fixed system, lay open to receive new opinions, and to embrace new doctrines.

In tracing the progress of a more rational and pure idea of the Supreme Ruler of the universe, than was entertained from the earliest times by the *many*, we shall find, that the EAST shed the first light under whose influence the variety of systems that afterwards



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GENERAL REFLECTIONS. 17

afterwards prevailed, grew up. Pherecides seems to have been the first who introduced into Greece a regular notion of a state of rewards and punishments, in the doctrine of the metempsychosis, which, many ages previous to his time, prevailed, not only in Egypt, but among several more Eastern nations.

Pythagoras*, the disciple of Pherecides, travelled into Egypt and Chaldea, and, on his return from Babylon, extended and improved the doctrines of his predecessor. It is a doubt among ancient writers, whe-

* Diogenes Laertius, Porphyry, and Jamblichus, who have written his life, speak only of his travels in Chaldea, Egypt, Greece, and Italy; but from the testimony of other authors it appears more than probable, that he extended his travels to India, and that his philosophical opinions, and especially his doctrine of the transmigration of souls, were derived from the instructions of the Brachmanes. See Eusebii Prep. Evang. cap. 10. 4. Alex. Polyhist. Apul. S. Clem. of Alexandria.



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ther he left any works behind him, or not; but by what may be collected from the writings of his disciples, it appears that he taught the existence of a Supreme Being, by whom the universe was created, and by whose providence it is preserved: that the souls of mankind are emanations of that Being*: that, on their separation from the body, they go to places destined for their reception; the souls of the virtuous, after having been purified from every propensity to the things of this world, being re-admitted into the divine source from whence they flowed; and the souls of the wicked sent back to animate other bodies of men or beasts, according to the degree and nature of their vices, until, in a course perhaps of many transmigrations, they have expiated their crimes. Abstinence from animal food was a natural consequence of these doctrines; but the Pythagoreans re-

* See Hindoo Philosophy, SKETCH X.

frained



GENERAL REFLECTIONS. 19

frained likewise from every sort of intoxicating liquor, and from eating beans, for which they seem to have entertained a superstitious respect, though we are unacquainted with the cause. Besides theology, Pythagoras is said to have instructed his scholars in arithmetic, mathematics, natural history, and music. His school formed a kind of community, into which he admitted the women and children of his followers. He exacted from his disciples a voluntary poverty; or rather that they should divest themselves of property individually, and live upon one common stock. He imposed secrecy; and, in order to teach them patience and perseverance, they were prohibited from speaking for a greater or less space of time, as he thought they stood in need of trial and exertion*. They were divided into two classes.

* Some of the ancients, in speaking of the education given to the children of the Brachmanes, say, that while



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classes. Those who had made a certain progress, were admitted about his person, and with them he used plain and natural language; but to the rest, who were separated from him by a curtain, he spoke in metaphors and symbols. His doctrines made a considerable progress in Greece and Italy, and probably gave birth to many of the more rational systems of philosophy that succeeded them.

SOCRATES, who was perhaps the wisest of all the ancient philosophers, confined his doctrines chiefly to maxims of morality. He endeavoured to bring men back from the wild and speculative notions which

the masters were teaching, the scholars listened with silent attention; that they were not only forbidden to speak, but even to cough or spit; that all the scholars eat in common; that their meals were preceded by bathings and purifications; and that before the first meal they were obliged to render an account how the morning had been employed. Vide Strabo, 15. Apul. Floridor. 1.

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GENERAL REFLECTIONS. 21

characterised the learning of his countrymen at that time, and to confine the studies of his disciples to their own breasts, in which benevolence and virtue could not fail of producing happiness.

His opinions, as handed down to us by those who constantly attended him, declare his belief in the unity of God, and in the immortality of the soul. He taught, that though God has not revealed to us, in what manner he exists, his power, his wisdom, and never-ceasing providence, are exhibited in all we see: that the order and harmony which reign throughout the universe announce a Supreme Being, by which every thing is conducted and preserved: that the religion of every country ordains his worship, let it be in ever so varied a manner; and that it is the duty of all to respect their national religion, except in such points as may be contrary to the laws of nature, or may divert the attention

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from



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from God to other objects. He seems to have believed that the soul existed before the body *; and that death relieves it from those seeming contrarieties to which it is subject, by its union with our material part. He taught, that the souls of the virtuous return to their former state of happiness, while those of the wicked are doomed to punishments proportionate to their crimes; that happiness, both in this and in a future state of existence, depends on the practice of virtue, and that the basis of virtue is justice. He comprised his idea of virtue in this maxim: "Adore God, "honor your parents, and do good to "all men. Such is the law of nature and "reason." In society, he thought that every private consideration ought to yield

* This idea seems evidently to have been borrowed from Pythagoras, who supposed the souls of men to have pre-existed in the divine soul, into which they at last return.



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GENERAL REFLECTIONS. 23

to what could promote the good and safety of the community to which we belong; and notwithstanding the mildness of his disposition, his love of tranquillity, and general good-will to mankind, he entered into the bustle of arms, and served during three years in the Lacedæmonian war, with distinguished reputation. Although he thought it not only weakness, but even impiety, to be afraid of death, he condemned suicide, as a proof of cowardice rather than of courage, and as a desertion of the post assigned to us by Providence. He strongly recommended perseverance, sedateness, and modesty; and of the last of these virtues he was himself a distinguished example, often declaring, that the utmost extent of his researches had only taught him, "that he knew nothing." He opposed the corruption of the magistrates, and the superstition and hypocrisy of the priesthood: and at last fell a victim to their machinations, for practising virtues which

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have



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have rendered his name sacred to posterity.

PLATO, a disciple of Socrates, travelled into Egypt and Italy *, and upon his return established his school at the Academy. Like Socrates, he believed in the unity of the Supreme Being, without beginning or end; but asserted, at the same time, the eternity of matter. He taught, that the elements being mixed together in chaos, were, by the will of God, separated, and reduced into order, and that thus the world was formed: that God infused into matter a portion of his divine spirit †, which animates and moves it; and that he committed the care of this world, and the creation of

* It appears that Plato once intended to visit India.
—*Ad Indos et Magos intendisset animum, nisi eum bella tunc vetuissent Asiatica.* Apul. de dogm. Plat.

† This is conformable to the opinions of the learned Hindoos. See SKETCH X.

mankind,



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GENERAL REFLECTIONS. 25

mankind, to beings who are constantly subject to his will. That mankind have two souls, of separate and different natures, the one corruptible, the other immortal : That the latter is a portion of the divine spirit, resides in the brain, and is the source of reason : that the former, the mortal soul, is divided into two parts, one of which, residing in the heart, produces passions and desires ; the other, between the diaphragm and navel, governs the animal functions : That the mortal soul ceases to exist with the life of the body, but that the divine soul, no longer clogged by its union with matter, continues its existence, either in a state of happiness or punishment : That the souls of the virtuous—of those whose actions are guided by their reason—return after death into the source from whence they flowed*, while the souls of those who submitted to

* In this he likewise agrees with the doctrines of the Hindoos.

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the government of the passions, after being for a certain time confined to a place destined for their reception, are sent back to earth, to animate other bodies.

The above idea of a future state appears to be the most prevalent in the works of this philosopher, and to form what may be called his *system*: But at the same time it must be confessed, that he broaches so many notions of a different or contrary nature, that we are frequently left at large in regard to his real sentiments. A passion for brilliant and novel doctrines, and too great a desire to acquire fame, even at the expence of truth, seem to have been the cause of this evident inconsistency in so great and wise a man*.

ARISTOTLE,

* The learned Monsieur Freret in speaking of Plato observes :

Il dit si souvent, et à si peu de distance, le pour et le contre lorsqu'il parle de l'état de l'ame après cette vie, que

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GENERAL REFLECTIONS. 27

ARISTOTLE, who studied at the Academy, has been perhaps unjustly accused of ingratitude to Plato. He undoubtedly used the privilege of every philosopher, in advancing his own opinions, and differing from those of others, but yet he always admired the talents, and did justice to the merits of Plato. He even pronounced an oration in his praise, and erected an altar to his memory.

que ceux qui regardent les sentimens de ce philosophe avec respect, ne peuvent s'empêcher d'être choqués et scandalisés. Tantôt il est de l'opinion de la metempsychose, tantôt de celle des enfers, et tantôt de toutes les deux il en compose une troisième. Ailleurs il avoit imaginé une manière de faire revivre les hommes, qui n'a nul rapport avec aucun autre de ses systèmes. Dans un endroit il condamne les scélérats à rester dans le Tartare pendant toute l'éternité, dans un autre il les en tire au bout de mille ans, pour les faire passer dans d'autres corps. En un mot, tout est traité chez lui d'une manière problématique, incertaine, peu décidée, et qui laisse à ses lecteurs un juste sujet de douter, qu'il ait été lui-même persuadé de la vérité de ce qu'il avançoit.

Aristotle



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Aristotle opened his school at the Lyceum; and, from his manner of teaching, his disciples became known by the name of Peripatetics. He has by some been charged with atheism, but I am at a loss upon what grounds, as a firm belief in the existence of a Supreme Being is clearly asserted by him, and not any where contradicted*.

He taught, that the universe, and motion, are eternal, having for ever existed, and being without end; and that although this world may have undergone, and be still subject to convulsions, yet motion, being

* Timée, Platon, et Aristote, ont établi formellement l'unité d'un Dieu : et ce n'est pas en passant, c'est dans des ouvrages suivis, et dans l'exposition de leurs systèmes fondés sur ce dogme. Aristote n'a pas hésité à reconnaître Dieu comme première cause du mouvement, et Platon comme l'unique ordonnateur de l'univers.

Voyage du jeune Anacharsis en Grèce.

regular



GENERAL REFLECTIONS. 29

regular in its operation, brings back the elements into their proper relative situations, and preserves the whole : that even these convulsions have their source in nature ; that the idea of a *Chaos*, or the existence of the elements without form or order, is contrary to her laws, which we every where see established, and which, constantly guiding the principle of motion, must from eternity have produced, and to eternity preserve, the present harmony of the universe : that in every thing we are able to discover a train of *motive* principles, an uninterrupted chain of causes and effects ; and that as nothing can happen without a cause, the word *chance* is an unmeaning expression, employed in speaking of effects, of whose causes we are ignorant* ; that in following this chain we are led up to the primitive cause, the Supreme Being, the universal Soul, who, as

* See Hindoo Philosophy, SKETCH X.

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the will moves the body, moves the whole system of the universe: That God, therefore, is the author of nature's laws.—He supposed the souls of mankind to be portions or emanations of the divine spirit, which at death quit the body, and, like a drop of water falling into the ocean, are absorbed in the divinity. Though he thus admitted the immortality of human souls, yet, as he did not suppose them to exist individually, he consequently denied a future state of rewards and punishments. “Of all things,” says he, “the most terrible is death, after which we have neither to hope for good, nor to dread evil.”

His maxims of morality were of the purest kind. He taught, that the great end of philosophy is to engage men to do that by choice, which the legislature would obtain from them by fear: That we should honour our parents, love our children, and do good to all men: That societies, or
5 states,



GENERAL REFLECTIONS. 31

states, are an aggregation of individual families, bound together by compacts and laws for their mutual interests; and that it is the duty of every member of society, not only to be obedient to those laws, but to neglect no opportunity of contributing to the general welfare of the society or state to which he belongs.

After the death of Aristotle, the Peripatetics seem to have been divided in their opinions concerning the soul, some continuing to assert that it was a part of the divine and eternal Spirit; others contending, that, being united with the body, their existence mutually depended upon one another, and that both were mortal.

ZENO of Cyprus, the founder of the Stoic sect, had first studied under Crates the Cynic, from whom he perhaps imbibed those notions of austerity which afterwards characterised his doctrines.

He



He believed in the unity of the Supreme Being, and that the names of the other deities of his countrymen were only symbols of his different attributes.

He taught, that throughout nature there are two eternal qualities; the one active, the other passive: That the former is a pure and subtle æther, the divine spirit; and that the latter is in itself entirely inert, until united with the active principle: That the divine spirit, acting upon matter, produced fire, air, water, and earth; or separated the elements from each other: That it cannot however be said, that God created the world by a voluntary determination, but by the effect of established principles, which have ever existed and will for ever continue: Yet as the divine spirit is the efficient principle, the world could neither have been formed nor preserved without him, all nature being moved and conducted by him, while nothing can move
or



GENERAL REFLECTIONS. 33

or affect God : That matter may be divided, measured, calculated, and formed into innumerable shapes ; but the divine spirit is indivisible, infinite, unchangeable, and omnipresent.

He believed that the universe, comprehending matter and space, is without bounds ; but that the *world* is confined to certain limits, and suspended in infinite space : That the seeds of all things existed in the primitive elements, and that by means of the efficient principle they were brought forward and animated : That mankind come into the world without any innate ideas, the mind being like a smooth surface, upon which the objects of nature are gradually engraven by means of the senses : That the soul of man being a portion of the *Universal Soul*, returns, after death, to its first source, where it will remain until the destruction of the world, a period at which the elements, being once

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more



more confounded, will again be restored to their present state of order and harmony.

Zeno taught, that virtue alone is the source of happiness, and that vice, notwithstanding the temporary pleasures that it may afford, is the certain cause of pain, anxiety, and wretchedness: That as men have it in their power to be virtuous, happiness may be acquired by all; and that those who by vice and intemperance become miserable, have no right to complain of their sufferings: That a virtuous man adores the Supreme Being, restrains his passions, and enjoys the goods of this world, as if nothing belonged particularly to himself; he considers all mankind with the same degree of affection, and having no strong partialities to individuals, he comforts indiscriminately those who are afflicted, receives such as want an asylum, and feeds those who hunger; all this he does undisturbed by strong emotion; he beholds
the



GENERAL REFLECTIONS. 35

the divine will in all things, and, amidst the tumults of this world, preserves a mind serene and unruffled ! neither reproach nor praise affect him, nor doth he indulge repentment on account of injuries ; in retirement, and in the obscurity of the night, he examines the actions of the day, avows his faults, and endeavours to amend them ; and when he finds the hour of dissolution approaching, he is not afraid of death, but either awaits, or voluntarily embraces it.

These seem to have been the principal outlines of the doctrines of Zeno ; although many of the Stoics carried the idea of the necessity of mortification and abstinence to a much greater length, than appears to have been the intention of their founder.

Epicurus, whose notions were so opposite to those of the Stoic philosophers, attempted to account for the various operations in nature, without having recourse to a Supreme



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preme Being. "There is no occasion," says he, "to ascribe to the gods what may be explained by philosophy." But in this bold assertion he betrays only presumption and vanity; as in the place of a rational system, allowing the agency of the divine will, he has substituted an hypothesis too fanciful and imaginary to support any clear and decided opinion.

He observes that, before we can form a fit idea of a substance that is distinguished by any particular shape, or that possesses any particular qualities, we must first have an idea of its primitive constituent parts. He therefore supposes, as the basis upon which his whole system rests, That every thing is composed of atoms, differing in shape, but each indivisible, and possessing a natural tendency to unite, the exertion of which is the primary cause of motion in the whole system of nature, and of the first formation of all bodies. He says, that
matter



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matter enables us to conceive an idea of certain portions of space, as different events do, of time; but it is impossible to imagine space to be bounded by any limits, or time to have had a beginning: That the universe must from eternity have been the same in its nature, its extent and quantity: That the world—our system—has its limits, and is suspended in infinite space, in which myriads of other worlds may likewise exist: That when we confine our ideas to the world we inhabit, we may form distinct notions of its duration, and suppose it to have a beginning and an end; but if we extend them to the universe, and to eternity, we find no resting-place, and they must necessarily be lost and confounded in the contemplation: That nothing can be properly said to be annihilated, for though things may be dissolved from their particular forms, and their component parts separated, their atoms remain what they

D 3

were



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were from eternity, their quantity being liable neither to increase nor diminution.

He supposes the soul of man to be likewise composed of atoms *indescribably* small, igneous, and volatile: That the principal seat of it is in the heart, and that in it originate pleasure, pain, fear, and anger: That it is moved to action by the objects conveyed to it by the senses, its chief affections being pain and pleasure, whence arise aversion and desire: That the soul being engendered with the body, grows up and declines with it; that their mutual faculties depend upon their union; and upon their separation, action being at an end, thought and memory cease.

A total disbelief in a state of future rewards and punishments, was the natural consequence of these dogmas. Epicurus thought the notions entertained in this respect



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spect by his countrymen, of Tartarus, of Elysian fields, and of a future judge of human actions, very unworthy of philosophy, and unnecessary to our happiness. He taught, that the study of nature, and of her laws, will produce tranquillity and peace, undisturbed by vain and imaginary terrors: That we must not however expect to be perfectly happy; *we are men, and not gods*, and should be contented with that degree of happiness our imperfect being will admit of: that nature doth not require to be corrected, but to be guided: that happiness and pleasure are synonymous; and that the practice of virtue affords the highest and most permanent happiness, which alone possesses this peculiar property, that it may be constantly enjoyed: that the good of society, and the love of mankind in general, ought to direct all our actions: that he who practises any one virtue to excess, neglecting his other duties, cannot be properly called



virtuous;—our actions must be in harmony; the musician does not content himself with tuning one particular string, all the tones must be in concord: that we may freely indulge those pleasures, that are not likely to produce any ill; and that a temporary ill must be suffered, in order to ensure a greater and more lasting pleasure; but that it is the excess of weakness to yield to the temptation of any gratification, which may leave a greater or more permanent evil behind: That, to preserve to ourselves the power of enjoying sensual pleasures, we ought to be temperate in the use of them: That among civilized nations, men, actuated by the public good, ought to be decent in their conduct; and scrupulously observe such rules and customs as are established to preserve order and harmony in the community to which they belong.

The doctrines of Epicurus were so popular, that the Athenians erected a statue to his



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his memory; they made a very rapid progress, and were soon carried into Italy. They were greatly admired by the Romans, and suited perhaps the feelings of a refined and luxurious people better than those of Zeno. Lucretius, Celsus, Pliny the elder, Lucan, and many other distinguished Roman names, may be reckoned in the list of Epicureans; and the friend of Cicero, Pomponius Atticus, was a disciple of the Epicurean Zeno of Sidon.

Such are the chief features of those doctrines in philosophy which from the bosom of Athens spread themselves over Greece and Italy, and at last found their way into the remotest parts of the Roman empire. Though several Greeks had written in favour of atheism, yet it seems to have made but little progress: even most of the Epicureans so far modified the original tenets of the sect as to acknowledge the existence of a Supreme Being; and upon
the



the whole we may venture to conclude, that, towards the time of the appearance of Christ, men of learning, in general, were *deists*, and that only the people, and the ignorant, retained any respect for the ancient theology.

But however unanimous they may have been in their belief of the existence and unity of one Supreme Being, they were exceedingly divided in their sentiments concerning the nature and immortality of the soul *. Many of the most eminent philosophers treated the idea of a future state as a fable,

* Plato dixit animam essentiam se moventem ; Xenocrates numerum se moventem ; Aristoteles, intellectum seu motum perpetuum ; Pythagoras et Philolaus, harmoniam ; Posidonius, ideam ; Asclepiades, quinque sensuum exercitium sibi consonum ; Hippocrates, spiritum tenuem per omne corpus diffusum ; Heraclitus Ponticus, lucem ; Heraclitus Physicus, scintillam stellaris essentiae ; Zenon, concretum corpori spiritum ; Democritus, spiritum infertum atomis ; Critolaus Peripateticus, constare eam de quinta essentia ; Hipparchus, ignem ;



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a fable, and those who professed to believe in it, disagreed so widely among themselves, that no clear and decided opinion can be collected from their works. We find it a common maxim, that those could not suffer, who did not exist; and, taking consolation from an idea, from which nature recoils, they compared death to a profound sleep, undisturbed by dreams, when we are unconscious of existence. Innumerable instances might be quoted, of the prevalence of these doubts among the philosophers that flourished shortly before, and soon after, the appearance of the christian doctrines.—A few, however, may suffice.

When Cæsar pleaded for some of those that were engaged in the conspiracy of

ignem; Anaximenes, aëra; Empedocles et Critias, sanguinem; Parmenides, ex terrâ et igne; Xenophanes, ex terrâ et aquâ; Epicurus, speciem ex igne & aere & spiritu mixtam.

MACROBIUS in *Sat. Scip. lib. i. cap. 14.*

Catiline,

55



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Catiline, he said, "that death was not, in fact, any punishment, as it put an end to thought and pain."

Even Cicero, after having shewn the errors and uncertainty of those who had treated of a future state, says, in an epistle to Torquatus, that "death puts an end to thought and sentiment;" in one to Terentius, "that death is the end of every thing:" in another place, that "a firm and elevated mind is free from care and uneasiness, and despises death, which only places us in the state in which we lay before we were born:" and publicly before the judges and people he asserted, that, "by death, we lose all sense of pain*."

Epicetus

* Nam nunc quidem, quid tandem illi mali mors attulit? Nisi forte ineptiis et fabulis ducimur, ut existimemus illum apud inferos impiorum supplicia perferre, ac plures illic offendisse inimicos, quàm hic reliquisse: a focus, ab uxorum, a fratris, a liberum poenis, actum esse præcipitem in sceleratorum sedem
atque



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Epicætetus was of opinion, that after death we shall return to the source from whence we came, and be united with our primitive elements.

Strabo, in speaking of the Brachmanes, says, "Texere etiam fabulas quasdam, quemadmodum Plato, de immortalitate animæ, et de judiciis quæ apud inferos fiunt, et alia hujusmodi non pauca." STRABO, *lib.* xv.

Seneca writes in a letter to Marcia: "Cogita nullis defunctos malis affici illam quæ nobis inferos faciunt terribiles, fabulam esse, nullas imminere mortuis tenebras nec carcerem, nec flumina fla-

atque regionem, quæ si falsa sunt, *id quod omnes intelligunt*, quid ei tandem aliud mors eripuit, præter sensum doloris.

CICERO *pro Cluent.*

Yet Cicero says, in another place, "*Naturam ipsam de immortalitate animorum agere, quod si omnium consensus naturæ vox est, &c.*"

CIC. *Tusc. qu.* i.

"grantia



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“grantia igne, nec oblivionis amnem, nec
“tribunalia et reos. Luferunt ista poetæ,
“et vanis nos agitavere terroribus. Mors
“omnium dolorum et solutio est et finis,
“ultra quam mala nostra non exeunt, quæ
“nos in illam tranquillitatem, in qua ante-
“quam nasceremur jacuimus reponit. Si
“mortuorum aliquis miseretur cur et non
“natorum misereatur.” SENECA, *de Consol.*
ad Marciam, cap. 19.

The same philosopher in one of his tra-
gedies, publicly exhibited before the people,
avows the same opinion*.

* Verum est? an timidos fabula decipit?

Umbras corporibus vivere conditis?

An toti morimur, nullaue pars manet nostri?

S. Post mortem nihil est, ipsaque mors nihil:

Velocis spatii meta novissima.

Spem ponant avidi, solliciti metum

Quæris quo jaceas post obitum loco?

Quo non nata jacent. —

Mors individua est, noxia corpori

Nec parcens animæ. *Trag. AÆ II. Chorus.*

The

58



GENERAL REFLECTIONS. 47

The sentiments of Pliny are very plainly expressed in the following passage: "Om-nibus a suprema die eadem, quæ ante
" primum, nec magis a morte sensus ullus,
" aut corporis, aut animæ, quam ante
" natalem. Eadem enim vanitas in fu-turum etiam se propagat, et in mortis
" quoque tempora ipsa sibi vitam mentitur,
" alias immortalitatem animæ, alias transf-
" figurationem, alias sensum inferis dando,
" & manes colendo:—ceu vera ullo modo
" spirandi ratio homini a ceteris animalibus
" distet."

PLIN. *Hist. lib. 7. cap. 56.*

Many other instances might be adduced, to prove that the belief of the mortality of the soul was very prevalent; and that the notions of those who professed a contrary opinion were often contradictory and confused, and always without rational proof. Yet every one who reflected, must have been conscious of an intelligent principle within him, anxious to explore this im-
portant

portant but impenetrable secret, and in some measure intuitively convinced of a superiority to its present state, and of an existence in another. But though the consciousness of such a principle, and the variety of reasons it could discover to prove its immortality, might lead him to believe it; other arguments must have offered doubt—he saw the mortal frame constantly exposed to danger, natural dissolution gradually approaching, and even the faculties of the mind partaking of the decay of the body—he saw the friend that he cherished, or the object that he loved, consumed to ashes, or exposed to more humiliating corruption.—Did they exist who were gone?—Was he yet to see them?—Was he to exist himself?—Or was the scene to be eternally closed, and all our affections, and those mental powers on which we vainly pride ourselves, to be dissolved in nothing? A variety of anxious thoughts must have pressed upon the mind; and, in the



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the impatience of agonizing doubt, it was perhaps disposed to arraign the justice of the Supreme Being, for having given faculties to inquire into that awful question, yet insufficient to resolve it.

In the midst of this solicitude, Christianity was announced, declaring the veil which covered that mystery to be removed, and, out of compassion to the human race, the certainty of a future state to be revealed by God himself. The pleasing prospect was held out to all classes of men indifferently; no distinction was made between the emperor and the slave; happiness and misery depended on the firmness of belief in the doctrines, and the practice of the injunctions, of Christ, the morality of which, though consonant to, perhaps surpassed in purity, the precepts of those wise and virtuous philosophers who had already instructed mankind.

Not less flattering than the prospect of the immortality of the soul, was that of the resurrection

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furrection



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urrection of the body; and this doctrine may likewise have considerably assisted the rapid advancement of Christianity*. It was better adapted to the capacities of the illiterate, than the abstruse notions of the heathen philosophers, and was acceptable to the feelings of all. Such is our dread of dissolution, that even those who were not decidedly convinced of the certainty, were flattered with the idea, of a future state, where they were again to appear in the form they then enjoyed, and see and converse with those they loved, in the shape they had already known them.

The greatest difficulty in the way of conversion, seems to have been the mystery by

* Though the belief of the resurrection of the body was professed by all the Jews, except the Sadducees, it does not seem to have been entertained by any of the Greeks and Romans.—Many of the Jews, after their return from Chaldea, believed in the Metempsychosis.

which



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which God had conveyed his will to man; which being above human comprehension, could not be explained, and was therefore either to be rejected or believed; but, in rejecting this mystery, men must also have rejected the authority on which their expectation of a future state was founded.

The early Christians supported their faith with great purity of manners; which, with the examples of the martyrs, must have greatly contributed to obtain belief, and to supply the place of argument. The mind is naturally disposed to compassionate those who suffer; their words and actions have more than ordinary weight. The martyrs submitted to all the torments which cruelty could invent, with patience and resignation; rejected every offer of relief, when proposed to them on condition of their denying their faith in Christ: they met death itself with indifference, and in
E 2 their



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their last moments shewed the fullest persuasion, that they were only going to quit a mortal and inconvenient frame, to enjoy more perfect happiness.

That the abovementioned causes forwarded the success of Christianity, may be observed from the little progress it has made in Hindoostan. The Hindoos respect their own religion, believe in a future state, and persecution is entirely contrary to their doctrines. Notwithstanding the labours of missionaries; therefore, for upwards of two centuries, and the establishments of different Christian nations, who support and protect them, out of at least thirty millions of Hindoos, that are in the possessions of the English and of the Princes who are dependant on them, there are not, perhaps, above twelve thousand Christians, and those almost entirely *Chandalabs*, or outcasts *.

The

* " Tout Indien, qui embrasse le Christianisme, est
" absolument banni de sa tribu, est abandonné aux
" insultes



The early Christians seem to have been without any settled hierarchy, and without any established forms of religious worship. Dispersed in the different cities of the Roman empire, they formed themselves into societies, which were only connected with each other by professing the same belief, and being exposed to equal danger. When the members of these societies occasionally met together, any one spoke who felt himself so disposed; and the first appearance of distinction or precedence we can find, was the choosing of presbyters or elders, to whom was entrusted the care of assembling the members at fit times; of watching over their manners; and of assisting their distressed brethren from the voluntary contributions of the society. As the number

“ insultes de toute la nation : Aussi ne trouvent-on
“ point que la religion Chretienne ait fait de grands
“ progrès en ce pais la, quoiqu'en disent les mission-
“ naires Romains.”

La Croze, tome ii. liv. 6. p. 296. Ed. de la Haye, 1758.



54 (GENERAL REFLECTIONS.

of profelytes increased, further and more permanent regulations were thought necessary; and the next step to higher preferment that is recorded, was the election of certain persons among the presbyters, to preside at the assemblies, to collect the result of their deliberations, and who, in the interim of their meetings, had the power of receiving and applying alms, and of corresponding with the societies established in other places. The name given to these was *Episcopi*, a term we find equally applied to persons in different trusts, and which literally signified an inspector or superintendant *. In the process of time, the functions of religious worship were entirely committed to those inspectors and to their inferior

* The title of Pope (*Papa*) was originally given indiscriminately to all bishops and patriarchs, and it was only towards the end of the 11th century that Gregory the VIIth obtained, at a council held at Rome, that this appellation should be confined to that see. In the Greek church the ancient mode continues to this day.

assistants;



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assistants; and hence arose the distinction of the *clergy*, from the *laity*, or great bulk of the Christians. With the augmentation of the number and quality of the Christians, the situation of the clergy became naturally more important; fresh ceremonies were gradually introduced, to render the worship more splendid. From the supposed examples in the early ages of Christianity, and by forced interpretations of the sacred writings, a variety of pious duties was invented, of little real use perhaps to mankind, but calculated to obtain and preserve that dominion of the priesthood, by which it so long kept every other order of men in a state of the most abject subjection.—It was the slavery of the mind.—Philosophy and the arts, which had already been considerably affected by the influence of the new religion, were lost under the inundations of barbarians that overwhelmed the Roman empire. The small degree of uncouth learning which yet remained, being



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entirely in possession of the priests, considerably contributed to confirm their influence over the rude and uninstructed laity, and to maintain and extend superstition, which, from the earliest times, they seem to have fostered with unwearied pains. Their ascendancy being established without opposition or control, they not only commanded in spiritual matters, but directed in worldly affairs with imperious interference. Intoxicated with the submission that was every where shewn to them, they often committed such wanton and extravagant acts of authority, that we are frequently lost in amazement, between the insolence of those who commanded, and the folly of those who obeyed. But in the plenitude of their power, and in the enjoyment of the immense wealth they had by various means acquired, they neglected to observe that exterior decorum with which their conduct had been formerly clothed, and furnished examples



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examples of very licentious and disorderly manners. These did not escape observation; the people in some countries, notwithstanding their infatuation, began to murmur; while the higher ranks of men were already disposed to resistance. The invention of printing, about the middle of the fifteenth century, brought forth science from its dark retreats within the walls of monasteries, from whence it had shed but a faint and partial light upon the universal barbarism of the age. Superstition declined, in proportion to the progress made by letters; phænomena, that had been employed to awe the ignorant, were found to proceed from natural causes; and the minds of every class of men imbibed some part of that knowledge, which now began to diffuse itself all over Europe.

Controversy seems to have been the constant companion of religion:—it was almost coëval with our faith. But early in the sixteenth century it broke out with uncommon violence; and the disputes of churchmen



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men were carried on with so much acrimony and imprudence, that by means of the press, the whole arcana of the policy and abuses of the priesthood were laid open to the inquiry and judgment of the laity.

In order to crush the new opinions, which, in consequence of these disputes, began to appear and to spread themselves in many parts of Europe, the Roman pontiff had recourse to violent and injudicious measures. Anathemas and excommunications were pronounced against all who encouraged or professed them; and the princes of Christendom were called upon to exert their power and authority to eradicate and destroy them. But, as is generally the case when persecution is employed to oppose reason, it decided those who were wavering, and made men more positive in their resistance. The protestant doctrines spread with uncommon rapidity, and operated, wherever they gained ground, not only



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only to effect ecclesiastical, but likewise the most important political, changes. During the struggle that preceded them, Europe, for a long space of time, exhibited the most extraordinary and melancholy scene that is to be found in the history of mankind: a state of religious frenzy universally prevailed. The fire of persecution was lighted up from one extremity of Christendom to the other; and men saw their fellow-creatures and citizens committed to the flames, not only without remorse, but with pleasure and exultation. All the bonds of social life were broken; and bigotry and fanaticism were busily employed to smother the feelings of nature, and the sentiments of loyalty, of gratitude, and of friendship. Sovereigns descended from the throne to be the bloody assassins of their people*, or drove them to abandon their

* Fifty thousand inhabitants of the Low Countries are supposed to have been put to death on account of their



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their own, and seek refuge in other countries. Confidence and safety were nowhere to be found; for neither rank nor merit, obligations conferred, nor connections of blood, afforded any security. The oftensible cause of these enormities was religion, while the real and true objects of religion were forgotten. Men, apparently deprived of their reason, in the wild course of their mistaken zeal, never stopped to recollect that they were acting in disobedience to the laws of that God whom they pretended to serve, and in opposition to the doctrines they affected to profess, which inculcate charity, benevolence, compassion, and indulgence for the errors and infirmities of others.

their religious principles, during the reign of Charles V. only. The number seems almost incredible, but it is affirmed by several cotemporary historians. Yet Charles was milder and less bigotted than his son and successor Philip. The massacre in the night of St. Bartholomew at Paris, and similar scenes of horror in different parts of Europe, shew to what length a blind zeal can carry an unenlightened people.

But



GENERAL REFLECTIONS. 61

But the charm, that formerly rendered the minds of men capable of receiving with reverence any dogma that was prescribed to them, being broken, every one who was so inclined, commented upon and explained the sacred writings according to his own particular notions: and from among the Reformers arose a variety of sects, as intolerant towards each other, as the church of Rome was towards those who had emancipated themselves from its authority. The laity, who hitherto had been kept in profound ignorance, especially on religious matters, eagerly read the books of controversy, and felt their vanity considerably flattered, in being at liberty to discuss and give their opinions on subjects which but lately it would have been criminal for them to have inquired into. They became accustomed to study and investigation. The liberty that was given to the press in the countries where the Protestant religion prevailed, and especially in those which enjoyed



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joyed a free government, enabled men of genius to examine things with freedom, and to express themselves without restraint. Philosophy and the sciences, even in the midst of civil and religious revolutions, were making considerable progress; and these, with the improvements in navigation, which led to the discovery of other countries and other people, tended to expand the mind, and make men more liberal in their notions. The increase of circulating wealth, produced by the extension of commerce, and the gold and silver that were poured into Europe from America; the easy communication that was established between different countries, and the facility of exchanging their respective productions, produced new and varied wants and pleasures. The studious, the industrious, and the dissipated part of mankind, found each sufficient occupation. The sweets of social life became more numerous and refined; public tranquillity was necessary to the enjoyment of
5 them;



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them; and men grew averse to fierce civil broils, and indifferent about religious contests. But as they unfortunately often proceed from one extreme to the other; as formerly it was the fashion to seek fame by wild and extravagant acts of devotion, so of late years some have imagined that they evince a superiority of genius, by affecting to have no religion. But without entering into the arguments either of sceptics or divines, it will always afford comfort to the humble believer, to reflect, that the most profound metaphysicians, the best philosophers of this or any age, and those who have made the greatest progress in the sciences, were not only exemplary in their moral characters, but that their writings tend, while they enlighten the mind, to increase our veneration for the Supreme Being. The farther they proceeded in their discoveries, the more they adored the Creator of the universe, and perceived the
insuf-



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insufficiency of human wisdom to find out or explain his ways.

In some more modern writers we find the power of fancy, and the force of ridicule, employed to deprive mankind of their greatest consolation, and society of its best support;—but to what other motive can this endeavour be ascribed, than to a licentious vanity courting a criminal distinction?

Many of the early Christians, even some of the fathers of the church, previous to their conversion to Christianity, had adopted the opinions of Plato, and other Greek philosophers; and hence, doubtless, it arose, that some of the doctrines then professed are evidently tinged with their notions.

The belief of three states after this life, which is still enjoined by the church of
Rome,



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Rome, seems to have been taken from Plato; but this, as well as other opinions, might probably be traced to a more distant origin.

The doctrine of the Metempsychosis was openly avowed by some of the early sects *, who brought passages from the holy scriptures in support of their extraordinary fictions.

They likewise believed in the eternity of matter, *not supposing that any thing could be formed from nothing*. Nam et quidam infirmiores hoc prius credere de materiâ potius sub-jacenti volunt, ab illo universitatem deductam, secundum philosophos †.

* See Letter from Father Bouchet to M. Huet Bishop of Avranches.—Lettres edific. & curieuses, tome xii. p. 170. Edit. de Paris, 1781.

† Tertul. de Refur. Carn. c. 91.



Most of the Gnostics imagined that the Divinity (Demiurgus) who created the world, was different from, but subordinate to, the Supreme Ruler of the universe*.

Origen, and others, believed in the destruction and succession of worlds; and that these revolutions had ever existed and would continue throughout eternity †.

This opinion, as well as that of many of the Greeks on this subject, seems to be derived from the doctrine of transmigration; the soul that is said to pervade the globe, being supposed to be infused into that which may succeed it.—The Origenists thought that the souls of mankind had existed before the body, and, like the Hindoos, rejected the idea of eternal punishment.

* Ap. Eu. Præp. Ev. xi. 18.

† Orig. in Proem. &c.

Lactantius,



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67

Lactantius, who was selected to be the preceptor of the son of Constantine, and for his eloquence was distinguished by the appellation of *the Christian Cicero*, likewise believed in the pre-existence of the soul *.

The opinion of its being an emanation of the Divinity, which is believed by the Hindoos, and was professed by the Greeks, seems likewise to have been adopted by the Christians. Macrobius observes, *Animarum originem manare de cælo, inter rectè philosophantes indubitata constat esse fidei* †. —Saint Justin says, the soul is incorruptible, because it emanates from God ‡: and his disciple, Tatianus the Assyrian, observes, that man having received a portion of the Divinity is immortal as God is §.

* Lactant. Div. Inst. vii. 5.

† Macr. in Som. Scip. i. 9.

‡ S. Jus. de Refur. 9.

§ Tatian. cent. Grec. N. 10.



Many believed that the Deity had confided the care of the things of this world to celestial beings, destined to that purpose. Saint Justin Martyr says, in his Second Apology to the Senate of Rome, " God
" who created the universe, having arranged
" the elements, and the sun, the moon, and
" the stars; having disposed the seasons, and
" their various productions; having placed
" under man the things of the earth; com-
" mitted the human race, and all that is un-
" der heaven, to angels, whom he has com-
" manded constantly to watch over them *."

Athenagoras, in an address to the Emperor Marcus Aurelius, observes, " The
" Christians admit of a number of angels
" and spirits that God the creator distributed
" over the stars, the heavens, the world, and
" all that it contains †."

* St. Just. Apol. ii. n. 5.

† Athen. Legat. Chr. n. 10.



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GENERAL REFLECTIONS. 69

Some even imagined, that the space between *the heavens and the earth*, was inhabited by beings that were enemies to mankind, like the evil genii of Greece, and the Deutas of Hindoostan *.

“All the heretics of the early ages,” says Father Bouchet, “being infatuated with Platonism, ascribed to angels, what that philosopher said of inferior deities †.”

Had we sufficient data to go upon in examining the history of the Hindoo religion, we might probably follow the pure worship of an almighty, just, and merciful God, through all its stages of corruption, to its present complicated state. The following Sketches may perhaps enable

* S. Hier.

† Lettres edif. & cur. tom. xii. p. 191. Ed. de Paris, 1781.



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the reader to form some judgment upon this subject ; and whatever reason we may have to consider the religion we profess as a peculiar revelation of God, we ought to look upon the sincere believers of another, with less severity than men in general have done. To hate or despise any people, because they do not profess the same faith with ourselves ; to judge them illiberally, and arrogantly to condemn them, is, perhaps, in fact, to arraign the wisdom and goodness of the Almighty.



S K E T C H II.

*Sources of Information concerning
Hindoostan.*

I N tracing the progress of the arts and sciences, we have been accustomed to consider Egypt as the country which gave them birth; but an opinion has lately been entertained, that they were probably brought thither from Hindoostan. An analogy has been discovered between the religion of the Hindoos and Egyptians; a similitude is found in some of their customs; and a certain acquaintance with the same sciences seems to have been common to both. To wrest an honour from the Egyptians which they have so long and so peaceably enjoyed, to surmount the prejudices that are in their favour, and to

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over-



72 SOURCES OF INFORMATION

overturn an opinion that has been confirmed by the sanction of so many ages, seems a work so replete with difficulty, that I think no one who shall attempt it, should flatter himself with hopes of complete success. When opinions are once adopted, men seldom go fairly in quest of truth; there is always a bias to these; they generally look for what may strengthen, and receive unwillingly what may combat them.

In our early youth we imbibed, with classic learning, a degree of veneration for the Egyptians, and hence a predilection in their favour that will probably remain with us during our lives. We thought we beheld the arts and sciences coming from Egypt, and spreading themselves in those countries, to which we always look back with a degree of enthusiasm; it never entered our imagination to go beyond that, and to seek their origin in a more distant clime; but we gave up our admiration to the



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people to whom the Greeks themselves owed that instruction which rendered them superior to other nations.

From Greek and Roman authors we learn but little of the Hindoos; and the attention they excite in history seems rather to arise from their having been conquered by some great hero, or mentioned by some favourite writer, than from their own consequence as a nation. We were indifferent about a people of whom we had scarcely any knowledge. But the desire of conquest, and the thirst of gain, having brought us to a more intimate acquaintance with them, and the spirit of inquiry being roused, we go back with avidity to those passages which had left but a slight impression, and are surprised to see the same manners and customs, the same religion and laws, existing, and now in use, which we find to have prevailed at the remotest period we can trace.

Though



74 SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Though it be almost three centuries since Europeans first navigated to the East Indies, it is but a very few years since such inquiries were set on foot, as could lead us to any satisfactory information concerning a people who perhaps merit the attention of the curious, more than any other nation on the globe. But, happily, the obscurity in which they were involved seems gradually to be dissipating; and we may now flatter ourselves that we are in the way to obtain a knowledge of all that is to be learnt of their history. How far that may extend, is yet uncertain; but the lights which have already been obtained, sufficiently shew them to have excelled as a civilized and polished nation, before any other that we are acquainted with.

We are informed that Mr. Hastings, soon after his appointment to the government of Bengal, conceived the idea of procuring a code of the laws and customs of the Hindoos,



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doos, with an intention to conciliate their affections, by paying a proper regard to their institutions and prejudices. For this purpose he invited from Benares, and other parts of the country, Brahmans learned in the Sanskrit language; the most authentic materials were collected, and translated from the original text into the Persian idiom. The Brahmans began the work in May 1773, and finished it in February 1775*.

A society was some years afterwards established at Calcutta, in order to make inquiries into the civil and natural history, antiquities, sciences, and literature of Asia, which, we are told, has made considerable progress; and that the president, Sir William Jones, as well as some of its other members, are now sufficiently acquainted with the Sanskrit to be able to translate it with facility.

* It was translated from the Persian into English by Mr. Halhed.



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Of the local state of the country, the best account we yet have, is to be found in a *Map* and *Memoir*, published by Major Rennel, who was several years surveyor-general of Bengal and the other provinces that are subject to that government. Beside the surveys and inquiries made by Major Rennel and other professional men, our geographical knowledge has been greatly improved, in consequence of the embassies sent from Calcutta to Thibet and Poonah, and the marches of our armies in the late war with the Mahrattas, across the peninsula from the Ganges to Guzerat. Men of science having accompanied the embassy to Poonah, and served in those armies, the precise situation of particular places, with their directions and distances from each other, were accurately ascertained.

I am indebted for much curious, as well as useful, information to Lieutenant Colonel Polier, Mr. John Stuart, and Mr. George Foster.



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Foster. Lieutenant Colonel Polier resided near thirty years in Hindostan, part of which he spent at Delhy, and its neighbourhood. Mr. Stuart * and Mr.

Foster

* Mr. Stuart went from Mafulipatam to Hydrobad, the capital of the Nizam's dominions, and from thence to Seringapatam, the capital of Myfore, in which country he remained fourteen months. He came from thence to Madras. In his second journey, he went from thence to Hydrobad, Aurengabad, Jynagur, Delhy, through the Panjab, to within sixteen miles of Lahore. He returned to Delhy, and came by the way of Oude and Benares to Calcutta. After remaining some time in Bengal and Bahar, he went by sea down the Perfian Gulf, and from Ghrey, at the mouth of the Euphrates, crossed the desert in the widest diagonal part to Aleppo, and, embarking at Scanderoon, came to England. In 1783, he went to Moscow, with the intention of going through Tartary to India, but finding it difficult to procure a passport for proceeding from Astracan, he came by the way of Vienna to Italy, and went from thence by sea to Constantinople. Going by Diarbukkeer (or Mesopotamia), Moful, and Kirkout, to Bagdat, he went from thence into Persia. After staying some months at Ispahan, Sheeras, &c. he came to Bassorah, and from thence through



78 SOURCES OF INFORMATION.

Foster * have visited more of the interior parts of India than any other Englishman I have heard of; and those gentlemen, by speaking fluently some of the Oriental languages, and by living in habits of intimacy with the natives, have been able to learn things unknown to us, and to explain others which seem to have been misapprehended †.

But the honour is due to the French, of having first brought out, from the recesses of
the

through Annadolia (or Natolia) to Constantinople and Vienna. He has since then visited Swedish Lapland, above a degree farther north than Torno, and is now prosecuting his travels through other parts of Europe.

* Mr. Foster went from Madras by land to Calcutta, from thence to Benares, Agra, Delhy, &c. to Kaffimire, where he continued several months, and going by Cabul through Persia, came by the Caspian Sea to Russia, and from thence to England.

† Though much miscellaneous information concerning the Hindoos may be found in different authors of our own and other nations, who have written on Hindostan, none that I am acquainted with, have
made



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the Hindoo temples, and communicated to the world in a regular and scientific manner, the astronomy of the Brahmans, of which, till then, we had but vague and uncertain notions. It was *Le Voyage dans les Mers de l'Inde*, by Monsieur le Gentil *, that first enabled us to form a right conception of it, and to perceive those characteristic marks which distinguish it from that of

made *them* the objects of their immediate and impartial inquiry. Indeed, until now, the sources of information have been uncertain and confined; but, at present, as we have got possession of the key to knowledge, the *Sanskrit language*, and of the country where its chief repository is supposed to be, we may expect, from the zeal and abilities of Sir W. Jones, and the other members of the society of Calcutta, to have our curiosity gratified, upon better and more authentic grounds.

* See *Voyage dans les Mers de l'Inde*, fait par Ordre du Roi, a l'occasion du Passage de Venus sur le Disque du Soleil le 6 Juin 1761, et le 3 du même Mois 1769, par Monsieur le Gentil, de l'Academie des Sciences.

other



80 SOURCES OF INFORMATION, &c.

other nations. Since then, it has been more fully illustrated, in a most ingenious and learned treatise, by Monsieur Bailly *.

Whether the Egyptians received it from the Hindoos, may be a subject of farther inquiry; but if, after a careful examination, we are obliged to allow the Hindoos to be the inventors of a science that requires so much ingenuity and observation, we shall be inclined to suppose that they were likewise the authors of that mythology which will be found to bear so great a resemblance to that of the Greeks and Romans.

* See *Traité de l'Astronomie Indienne et Orientale*, par Monsieur Bailly, de l'Académie Française des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres, des Sciences, &c.



S K E T C H III.

Sketch of the History of Hindoستان.

THE ancient Greeks seem in general to have believed that the natives of India were *aborigines* *, and that they never either emigrated themselves, or received any colony from strangers †.

The learned Hindoos say, that Hindoستان ‡, extending from the river
Indus

* Diod. ii.

† Strab. xv.

‡ *Hindoستان*, so called by foreigners; but I am informed that no such words as *Hindoo* or *Hindoستان* are to be found in Sanskrit, which we may suppose to be the original language of that country, or at least the oldest now existing there. In Sanskrit it is called



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Indus* on the west, to the Burumpooter†
on the east, and from the mountains of
Thibet

Bharata, and *Bharat-virsh*.—Bharat appears, likewise, to be the name of an ancient imperial family.—Hindoostan seems, evidently, to come from the Persians.—*Stan*, in Persian, signifies *country*, and *Hindoo* may have been taken from a corruption of *Sinde*, the name of the river that separated Bharata from the Persian dominions. (Rennel—Wilkins—Stuart, &c.) But to conform to the practice now in use, I shall continue to call the country *Hindoostan*, and its original inhabitants *Hindoos*.

* From the city of Attuck, in lat. 30. 20. to Moul-tan. This river is called Attuck, which in the Sanskrit language is said to signify *Forbidden*, as it was the boundary of Hindoostan on that side, and unlawful for the Hindoos to go beyond it without permission. Below Moul-tan it is called Soor, until it divides itself into a number of streams near Tatta; the principal one is called Mehran; but the river, when generally spoken of, is called in the Sanskrit language *Sindhoo*, and vulgarly *Sinde*. By Europeans it has, from the earliest times, been called *Indus*. (Pliny says, “*Indus ab incolis appellatus*,” &c. Lib. vi.)

† A river east of the *Ganga*, or *Ganges*, the proper name of which is *Brimha-pooter*, or the son of *Brimha*.
These



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Thibet on the north, to the sea on the south ; acknowledged the dominion of one mighty

These two rivers derive their sources from the mountains of Thibet, from whence they proceed in opposite directions, the Ganges to the west, and the Burum-pooter to the east. The Ganges, after wandering through different valleys, rushes through an opening in the mountains at Hurdwar, and flows, a smooth navigable stream, in a course of about 1350 miles, through the plains of Hindostan to the sea. In its way it receives eleven capital rivers, some of them equal in magnitude to the Rhine. From its arrival on the plains at Hurdwar to the conflux with the Jumna, its bed is in most places about a mile and a quarter wide ; from thence its course becomes more winding : about 600 miles from the sea, its bed in the broadest part is three miles over, in the narrowest half a mile, the stream increasing and decreasing according to the seasons. In the summer months it is fordable in some places above the conflux with the Jumna, but the navigation for small vessels is never entirely interrupted : below the conflux, the depth is much more considerable, as the additional streams add more to that, than to its breadth. At the distance of 500 miles from the sea, the channel is 30 feet deep when the river is at the lowest : but the sudden and great expansion of the



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mighty sovereign: but that in this immense empire there were several hereditary

stream, depriving it of sufficient force to sweep away the sand and mud that is thrown across it by the strong southerly winds, the principal branch cannot be entered by large vessels. About 220 miles from the sea in a straight direction, but 300 in following the windings of the river, the branches called the rivers Cassembazar and Jellinghy unite, and form the river Hugly, on which is the port of Calcutta. The navigation of ships in this river is always dangerous, as the sand-banks frequently shift, and some project so far into the sea, that the channels between them cannot be easily traced. The medium rate of motion of the Ganges is about three miles, and during the rains, and while the waters flow into it from the inundated lands, from five to six miles an hour. In general, there is on one side of the river an almost perpendicular bank, more or less elevated above the stream according to the quantity of water: near the bank the water is naturally deepest; on the opposite side, as the bed slopes gradually, the water is shallow, even at some distance from the margin: but this is the natural effect of the windings of great rivers, the current being always strongest at the external side of the curve.

In



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ditary kings, who paid him a certain tribute, though in the internal government

In places where the stream is remarkably rapid, and the soil loose, such tracts of land are sometimes swept away as would astonish those who have not been accustomed to see the increase and force of some rivers, during and immediately after the periodical rains in the tropical regions. The effects of the stream at those curves sometimes produce a gradual change in the course of rivers, and in proportion as they encroach on one side, they quit the other. Hence there are instances in Hindostan, of towns, said by ancient authors to be situated on the banks of rivers, that are now at a considerable distance from them. The Hindoos, in their fabulous account of the Ganges, say, that it flows from the foot of Vishnou, the preserving deity, and in entering Hindostan, passes through a rock, resembling the head of their sacred animal, the cow. The British nation, with its tributaries, enjoy the whole of its navigable course.

The Burumpooter, taking almost an opposite direction, runs through Thibet, where it is called Sampoo, or Zianciu, which is said to bear the same interpretation with the Ganga or Ganges, *the river*. It washes the border of the territory of Lassa, and ap-



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ment of their countries they were independent *.

One of the ancient dynasties of their emperors is called the Sourage-buns, or the dynasty of the children of the sun; the

proaching to within about 200 miles of Yunan, the westernmost province of China, turns suddenly back, and running through Affam, enters Bengal on the N. E. During a course of 400 miles through Bengal, it so much resembles the Ganges, that a description of one may serve for both, excepting that, for the last 60 miles before their junction, it forms a stream from four to five miles wide. The waters of those great rivers being joined, form a gulph of considerable extent, interspersed with islands, some of them several leagues in circumference. Major RENNEL.

* Diodorus Siculus says, "India in quatuor latera distincta est; quod ad orientem, quodve ad meridiem vergit, magnum mare circumdat. Quod arctos spectat, Hæmodus mons ab ea Scythia, quam habitant hi qui appellantur Sacæ, dividit; quartum, quod est ad occidentem fluvius Indus terminat, omnium fere, post Nilum, maximus. Magnitudinem Indiæ ab oriente ad occasum, scribunt stadiorum viginti octo millium duorum et triginta. *Lib. II. cap. x.*

other



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other the Chander-buns, or that of the children of the moon *.

After these we hear of the house of Bharat: and the wars between two of its branches, the Kooroos and the Pandoos, are the subject of a celebrated epic poem, called the Mahabharat †, said to have been written by Krishna Dwypayen Veiâs, a learned Brahman, above 4000 years ago. A famous battle, fought on the plains of Delhy, at the beginning of the Kaly-Young, or present age, 3102 years before Christ, gave, to Arjoon, one of the five sons of Pandoo, and favourite of the god Vishnou, the empire of Bharatvirsh, or Hindostan.

* The names, however, in Sanskrit, according to Mr. Wilkins, are properly, *Soory-vangs*, and *Chandra-vangs*; or, *the race of the Sun*, and *the race of the Moon*.

† The Bhag-vat Geeta, which is an episode of this poem, has been translated from the Sanskrit language into English by Mr. Charles Wilkins. It contains dialogues between Arjoon and Krishna, who is supposed to have been the god Vishnou in one of his incarnations.

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About



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About 1600 years before Christ, a war with the Persians * is recorded; and about 900 years after that war †, another is mentioned, during which the Hindoo emperor is said to have been carried prisoner into Persia, and his son, who succeeded him, to have become tributary to the kings of that country. The tribute having been withheld by the second Phoor, or Porus, is assigned as the cause of the invasion of India by Alexander ‡. Some Hindoo writers mention the victory obtained by him over Phoor, and say that he quitted

* No mention is made of this war by any ancient European historian.

† The first Darius, according to Herodotus, invaded India about 504 years before Christ, which is probably the war here meant. The error in the date, which is about 196 years, may have arisen in copying or translating from the Hindoo manuscript.

‡ Pliny says; "Colliguntur a libero patre ad Alexandrum magnum, reges eorum CLIV annis quinque millia, cccxi adjiciunt et menses tres." *Lib. VI. cap. xvii.*

Hindostan



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Hindoſtan on account of a mutiny in his army*.

After the return of Alexander, it appears that ſeveral revolutions happened among the different branches of the reigning family; and that many of the tributary princes, taking advantage of theſe convulſions, rendered themſelves independent. The country thereby lay open to eaſy conqueſt; thoſe princes were un-

* This correſponds with the accounts given of the mutiny on the Banks of the Hyphaſis, or modern Beyah. Major Rennel ſuppoſes, that Alexander erected his twelve altars at Firoſepour, near the junction of the Beyah, or Hyphaſis, with the Setlege, or ancient Hefudrus.

It may be mentioned here by the way, that Greek coins, medals, and engravings, are ſometimes found in India. I have ſeen two cameos of exquisite workmanſhip; and ſaw a beautiful medal of Alexander, about the ſize of a half crown piece, which was given to the Nabob of Arcot. It ſhould be remembered that Alexander had his own coin ſtruck in his army by Greek workmen that he carried with him for that purpoſe.

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willing to appeal to a sovereign for protection, whose yoke they had shaken off; and invaders, instead of meeting a united people, and having to contend with the force of the whole empire, seem only to have been separately opposed by those whose territories they attacked.

The Greeks, who remained in possession of some of the northern provinces, were successfully attacked by a Hindoo prince named by them Sandrocottus*. Seleucus, then master of the country between the Indus and Euphrates, made a treaty with him 303 years before Christ; but whether he upon that occasion retained, or ceded, the provinces conquered by Alexander, is extremely doubtful.

About 150 years after this treaty, it appears that some of the same provinces which had been subdued by the Greeks, were conquered by the Bactrians, whose empire

* Plutarch. Justin. lib. xv. cap. iii.



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was formed about 250 years before Christ, by Theodotus, when governor of Bactriana, under Antiochus Theos. Theodotus was forced to yield his conquests in India to Mithridates Arfaces king of the Parthians, who considerably extended them; and the Parthians were in their turn expelled by a Tartar nation, called by Ptolemy and others *Indian Scythians*, who are said to have spread themselves on both sides of the Indus, to the sea*.

These conquests, however, may be said to have extended little farther than the bordering provinces; but the invasions of the Mogul Tartars overturned the Hindoo empire, and, besides the calamities that immediately attend conquest, fixed on succeeding generations a lasting train of miseries. They brought along with them the spirit of a haughty superstition; they exacted the conversion of the vanquished; and they

* Strabo.—Justin.—Excerpta Valefiana.



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came to conquer, and to remain. The success of the first invaders invited many to follow them; but we may consider the expedition of Tamerlane as that which completed the ruin of the Hindoo government. Having, in the year 1398, sent his son Mirza Pir Mahomed before him, he entered India himself; relieved Mirza, who had taken, but was afterwards shut up in Moulton; defeated the armies of the Mahomedan king of Delhy, and made himself master of his capital. Wherever he appeared he was victorious; neither Muffulman nor Hindoo could resist his fortune; nor could any one who opposed him, expect his mercy. Marking the march of his army with blood, from the banks of the Attuck to the eastern side of the Ganges, and from thence back by a different route, he returned to Samarcand.

The disappearance of this angry meteor was followed by a long scene of warfare among the Mahomedan invaders themselves;



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felves; and the first of the descendants of Tamerlane who may be said to have firmly established himself on the throne of Delhy, was Acbar. He succeeded his father Homaon in 1556, and died in 1605, after a successful reign of about fifty years. He considerably extended the dominion of the Mahomedans, and was the first of their princes who regularly divided the empire into *Soubadaries*, or viceroyships, some of which were equal in extent to the largest European kingdoms. Over each of these he appointed a soubadar, or viceroy. The soubadaries were again divided into provinces, governed by naibs, or nabobs, who, though subject to the soubadar, had the privilege of immediately corresponding with the emperor's minister; the decision of civil causes belonged to the Cadi; the revenues and expences were superintended by a person appointed from the court; and the government of the principal forts was confided to officers who were independent of the viceroy.

During



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During his long reign, Acbar caused inquiries to be made, to ascertain the population, the natural productions, the manufactures, &c. of the different provinces; the result of which, with various regulations arising therefrom, were formed into a book called the *Ayin Acbaree*, or institutes of Acbar, which still exists in the Persian language. He endeavoured to correct the ferocity of his countrymen; was indulgent to the religion and customs of the Hindoos; and, wishing to revive the learning of the Brahmans, which had been persecuted as profane by the ignorant Mufftis, he ordered the celebrated observatory * at Benares to be repaired, invited the Brahmans to return to their studies, and assured them of his protection.

* Doctor Robertson says, this observatory was built by Acbar; whereas I have always understood that it was only repaired by his orders; and hence, probably, it may arise, that the ancient Hindoo architecture is mixed with the pointed Saracen or Gothic arch, which is now to be perceived in the building.



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The dominion of Acbar does not seem to have extended south beyond the 21st degree of latitude. From thence, southward, a great part of the country was still subject to a very powerful Hindoo prince, to whom many great Rajahs * paid tribute. The last of these Princes dying without issue, most of his territories submitted to usurpers; and two Mahomedans, who had served as generals in his army, found means to establish themselves independent sovereigns of Golcondah and Viziapour.

Aurengzebe, son of Shaw Gehan, the grandson of Acbar, completed the conquest of many countries that his predecessors had in vain attempted to subdue. While in the Deckan, he ordered the city of Aurenghabad to be built, to commemorate his

* Princes, or Nobles, very much resembling the great Nobility of Europe under the feudal governments. *Rajah* is derived from a Sanskrit word, signifying *splendor*.

victories.



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victories*. His dominions, according to Major Rennel, reached from the 10th to the 35th degree of north latitude, and were in some parts, of nearly an equal extent in breadth. His revenue is calculated to have been about thirty-five millions of pounds sterling:—an astonishing sum, especially in a country where the productions of the earth that are necessary for the support of man, are scarcely above a third of the price that the necessaries of life bear in England †.

Aurengzebe died in 1707, after a reign of forty-nine years; and though, to attain the throne, he confined his father to his seraglio, caused his brothers to be put to

* His first wife is buried there, to whose memory he erected a mosque, and a magnificent tomb.

† Beside the difference in the price of food, it must be considered that the native of Hindostan has no farther occasion for fuel, than what may be necessary to prepare his temperate meal; nor for clothing, to guard him against the inclemencies that are unknown in those mild regions.

death,



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death, and was guilty of many other enormities; yet, being once established on it, and seeing no competitors, he paid such close attention to the affairs of government and to the impartial administration of justice, was so judicious in his political conduct, and so successful in his wars, “that he deserves to be ranked with the ablest princes who ever reigned in any age or country.”

It was the policy of the court of Delhy frequently to change the viceroys. A historian relates, that one of them left the city, sitting with his back towards the head of the elephant; and on being asked the reason, replied, “That it was to look out for his successor.” The vast distance of some of the provinces from the throne, suggested the propriety of this measure, as well as of the regulations we have mentioned. But, with all the policy that human foresight might devise, such extensive dominions could only be governed and preserved, under wise and vigorous rulers; and such, when



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we consider the ordinary course of nature, and the usual education of princes, could not be expected in any long succession. Aurengzebe was a phenomenon that rarely appears in the sphere of royalty: his mind was formed during his long struggle for the empire, while he was obliged to command his passions, and study the ways and characters of mankind. "His sceptre was too ponderous to be wielded by the feeble hands of his successors;" and, in less than sixty years from his death, his wonderful empire was reduced almost to nothing.

Nizam al Muluc, viceroy of the Deckan, who, without open rebellion, had in reality rendered himself independent, to avert the storm with which he was threatened from the ministers of Mahomed Shaw, is supposed to have suggested to *Thamas* Kouli Kawn, who was then at Candahar, his celebrated invasion of Hindostan.

Thamas, after a single battle, entered the city of Delhy, and the vanquished emperor laid



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laid his *regalia* at his feet. Having collected immense wealth, and reserved to himself all the countries belonging to the Mogul empire that were on the other side of the Indus, he reinstated Mahomed Shaw on the throne with much solemnity, and returned with his army into Persia. It is said that, before his departure, he informed the emperor, who the persons were who had betrayed him, and gave him much wholesome advice. But the fabric was now shaken to its foundation, the treasury was empty, the troops were mutinous, the prince was weak, the ministers were unfaithful, and the viceroys of the distant provinces, though they affected submission, no longer respected commands which they knew could not be enforced, and in the end rendered their stations, that formerly were of short duration, hereditary in their families. All that now belongs to Shaw Allum, the present nominal emperor, is the city of Delhy, and a small district round it, where, even deprived of sight by the

H 2

barbarous



100 HISTORY OF HINDOSTAN.

barbarous hand of a rebel, he remains an empty shadow of royalty, an instance of the instability of human greatness, and of the precarious state of despotic governments. Under these, while the liberty and life of the subject are constantly exposed to danger, the crown totters on the head of the monarch: he who is the most absolute, is frequently the least secure; and the annals of Turkey, of Persia, and of the Mahomedan conquerors of Hindostan, teem with tragic stories of dethroned and murdered princes.

Throughout Hindostan there are many rajahs to be found, who still enjoy the territories of their ancestors. Some, happily, never were subdued, and owe their independence to the natural situation of their possessions, which renders invasion difficult. Others were permitted, from policy or necessity, to retain them, on condition of paying a stipulated tribute.

The



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The Hindoos are the only cultivators of the land, and the only manufacturers. The Mahomedans who came into India were foldiers, or followers of a camp, and even now are never to be found employed in the labours of husbandry or the loom.

H 3



S K E T C H I V.

*Government. Public Buildings. Forts, and
Places of the Residence of Rajahs.*

THE government throughout Hindostan seems to have been anciently, as it is at present, feudal; and if we may judge from the apparently happy state of those countries where the destructive hand of the conqueror had not yet been felt, and from the inviolable attachment which the Hindoos bear to their native princes, we must conclude, that, under them, they were governed on principles of the most just and benevolent policy. In those countries the lands were highly cultivated; the towns and their manufactures flourished; the villages were composed of neat and commodious



modious habitations, filled with cheerful inhabitants; and wherever the eye turned, it beheld marks of the protection of the government, and of the ease and industry of the people. Such was Tanjore, and some other provinces, not many years ago.

Under the ancient Hindoo government, there were several kings or *great Rajahs* *, who were tributary to the emperor; and other inferior Rajahs, or nobles, who paid tribute to their respective superiors, and who, when summoned to the field, were obliged to attend them, with a certain number of men in arms, in proportion to the value of their possessions. Besides the estates of Rajahs, there were other hereditary lands belonging to persons of less note, and some that were appropriated to charitable and religious purposes. We likewise find, that in many parts of Hindostan, certain lands, or commons, were attached

* Maha-Rajah.



to the different villages, which were cultivated by the joint labours of their inhabitants. The care of these lands was committed to the elders of the village, and their produce applied to maintain the poor, to defray the expence of festivals, and to pay dancers and players, who might occasionally be employed for the amusement of the villagers.

The *Ryuts*, or peasants, were allowed a certain portion of the harvest, by the lord or proprietor of the land, with which they maintained their families, provided and kept their cattle, and were furnished with feed for the succeeding season. The portion given to the peasant seems to have varied, and to have been chiefly determined by the fertility or barrenness of the soil, the ease or difficulty of cultivation, or the abundance or failure of the harvest.

In countries that are plentifully supplied with water, the labour of the husbandman
is



is much diminished, and his crops are generally very abundant; but on the coast of Coromandel, where the soil is for the most part sandy, and water scarce, greater exertion is required, which is often but scantily repaid.

In such countries as have not the advantage of being watered by considerable rivers; or in such parts where the water cannot be conveyed from them to the adjacent fields; tanks were made, which, being filled during the periodical rains, furnished water for the rice-fields, and for the cattle in the dry season. Some of these are of great extent, and were made by inclosing deep and low situations with a strong mound of earth*. Others of less magnitude, for the use of temples, towns, or gardens, are of a quadrangular form,

* On the bank of the great tanks, are generally found a *Choultry* and a Temple.

lined



lined with stone, descending in regular steps from the margin to the bottom *.

In the towns, as well as in most of the villages, are *Choultries*, or public buildings for the reception of travellers, which were erected and endowed by the munificence of the prince, the generosity of some rich individual, or, not uncommonly, in consequence of some pious vow. A Brahman resides near, who furnishes the needy traveller with food, and a mat to lie upon; and contiguous to them is a tank or well, that those who halt, may have it in their power to perform their ablutions before they eat, or proceed on their journey.

* I have seen some of these measuring between 3 and 400 feet on the side, and regularly lined with granite. The Hindoos, from some superstitious notion, never construct any thing of an exact square, but rather oblong; though the difference is frequently so small as scarcely to be perceptible to the eye.



The *Deiwuls*, or temples, called by the Europeans *Pagodas*, are still very numerous, especially in the southern provinces, and some of them of such remote antiquity, that no account is left, either in writing or by tradition, when or by whom they were erected. But the northern provinces being first conquered, the seat of the Mahomedan government fixed, and its greatest force exerted in those parts; most of the temples were destroyed, the images of stone broken, and those of metal melted to cover the floors of the mosques and palaces, that the faithful Mussulman should have the satisfaction daily to trample on what had been held sacred by the Hindoo.

The temples at Hurdwar, where the Ganges enters Hindostan; at Matra, the supposed birth-place of Krishna; at Oudgein; at Benares; and at Jaggernaut on the coast of Orissa; a temple on the top of a mountain at Trippety, about 40 miles N. E.



N. E. of Arcot ; one on an Island called Seringham, which is formed by the rivers Cavery and Coleroon, near Trichanapoly ; and one on the island of Ramasseram, between Ceyloan and the continent, seem from the most distant times to have been constantly held in the highest veneration. There are also many others that are much resorted to ; but of all those of which I have any knowledge, I believe that in Seringham * is the largest.

At

* About a mile from the western extremity of the island of Seringham, and at a small distance from the bank of the Coleroon, stands this celebrated pagoda. It is composed of seven square inclosures, one within the other, and standing at 350 feet asunder. The walls are of stone and mortar, and twenty-five feet high : every inclosure has four large gateways, with a high tower over them, one being in the centre of each side, and opposite to the four cardinal points. The outward gateway to the south is richly ornamented with pillars, some of which are single pieces of granite 33 feet long, and 5 in diameter, and those that form
the



At the pagoda of Jaggernaut, people of all casts and ranks eat together, without

the roof of the gateway, which is flat, are still larger. The pagoda is consecrated to Vishnou, and in the inner inclosure are the altars and the image of that deity. The Brahmans, who belong to the pagoda, are very numerous, and with their families are said to amount to some thousands of souls.

During the struggles between the English and French nations for superiority in the Carnatic, and in support of the Mahomedan viceroys, whose cause they respectively espoused, the repose of the Brahmans was disturbed, and their temple profaned; it was alternately taken possession of by the French and English armies. When those rude intruders first attempted to enter it, a Brahman who stood on the top of the outer gateway, after having in vain supplicated them to desist, rather than be a witness of such pollution, threw himself on the pavement below, and dashed out his brains.

About half a mile east from this pagoda, is another called Jumbookishna. When the French, who, with their ally Chunda Saib, had been for some time shut up in those two pagodas, surrendered them to Mr. Laurence in June 1752, a thousand Rajahpout seapoys refused to march out of Seringham until assured that their conquerors would not pass beyond the third inclosure,



110 GOVERNMENT, &c.

out distinction or pre-eminence. This is peculiar to that place, being no where else allowed; and the permission, or rather

inclosure, declaring they would die to a man in defending the passage to it: but Mr. Laurence, admiring their courage, and respecting their devotion, far from giving them offence, ordered that none should go beyond the second.

ORME, &c.

Tavernier gives the following description of a temple near Amidabad, which the Mahomedans had converted into a mosque: "Il y avoit, en ce lieu là, une
"pagode dont les Mahomedans se sont mis en possession pour en faire une mosquée. Avant que d'y
"entrer, on passe trois grandes cours, pavées de marbre, et entourées de galleries, et il n'est pas permis
"de mettre le pied dans la troisième sans oter ses souliers. Le dedans de la mosquée est ornée à la
"mosaïque, la plus grande partie étant d'agates de
"diverses couleurs, qu'on tire des montagnes de
"Cambaya, qui ne sont qu'à deux journées de là.
"On y voit plusieurs sepultures des rois idolâtres, lesquelles sont comme autant de petites chapelles
"à la mosaïque, avec de petites colonnes de marbre, qui soutiennent une petite voûte, dont le sepulchre
"est couvert."

*Voyage de Tavernier, tome iii. page 59.
édition de Paris, 1724.*

order,



order, for the pilgrims of different casts to do so, is said to be in commemoration of their hero and philosopher Krishna *, who always recommended complacency and affection for each other. A great quantity of victuals is every day prepared, and, after being placed before the altars, is partaken of by the pilgrims. The Brahmans belonging to this pagoda pretend, that it was built by order of the emperor, at the beginning of the Kaly-Young †, in honour of Vishnou, by whom the house of Pandoo was peculiarly protected ‡.

There are ruins on the coast of Coromandel, near Sadras, called, by Europeans, *the seven pagodas*, by the natives, Mavalipuram.

* Krishna is represented in the *Mahabarat*, and other works, to be the god Vishnou in one of his incarnations. See SKETCH III.

† See *Astronomy of the Hindoos*, SKETCH XI.

‡ See SKETCH III.



puram. The remains of a palace and temple, of great extent, may yet be traced. Some of the inscriptions and hieroglyphics with which the walls abound, are no longer understood; and though tradition informs us that this place was at a considerable distance from the shore, many of the ruins are now covered with water, and when it is calm may be seen under it *.

The immense temples, hewn out of the solid rock, and containing almost innumerable pillars, statues and figures in bas relief, that are to be seen on the islands of Salfette and Elephanta, and at Iloura, about 20 miles from Aurengabad †, announce a

* There are pieces of sculpture here in very perfect preservation, which, with many others that are scattered over Hindostan, prove the great superiority of the ancient Hindoos in this art, to their later descendants.

† For a particular description of those temples, see Thevenot and Anquetil, &c.: but besides these, others of a similar kind are to be met with in different parts of Hindostan.

work



work of such astonishing labour, that the people are firmly persuaded it could not have been executed by men, but was performed by genii, at the order of the gods.

The Hindoo poets frequently mention *Duarka* as a place highly celebrated. It is said to have stood at the extremity of the peninsula, and to have been swallowed up by the sea, a few days after the death of Krishna.

At the hour of public worship, the people are admitted to a peristyle, or vestibule, the roof of which, in the large temples, is supported by several rows of pillars; and while the Brahmans pray before the images, and perform their religious ceremonies, the dancing women dance in the court, or under the portico, singing the praises of the god to the sound of various musical instruments.

The inauguration of a temple is attended with great ceremony and propor-



tional expence. After it is completely finished, the Brahmans are perhaps obliged to wait several months, before they find, by their astrology, a fit day for that solemnity. The day is afterwards annually celebrated, and is called *the feast of the Dewul*. Every temple is dedicated to some particular deity, and each has its annual feast; beginning with the day on which the inauguration was performed: it lasts ten days, and to temples that are held in particular veneration, pilgrims resort on that occasion from almost every part of Hindostan. Few come without an offering, by which means alone the revenue of some of the temples is rendered very considerable; but, in the countries that are under the Mahomedan yoke, the Brahmans, as well as the pilgrims, are usually taxed by the government.

Throughout Hindostan we meet with many places of defence, which, from their
con-



construction, as well as from tradition, appear also to be of great antiquity, and seem designed to resist the effects of time as well as the attacks of an enemy. These alone are sufficient to shew, that the humane laws of Brimha could not secure the mild Hindoos from being disturbed by the fatal effects of ambition; and that the passions in every climate are sometimes too powerful to be restrained, even by the wisest and most salutary regulations. The building of places of security we find commanded by the law itself; for in the code of Hindoo laws, in a recapitulation of the qualities and things necessary for a ruler, it is said, "He shall erect a strong fort in the
" place where he chuses to reside, and shall
" build a wall on all the four sides, with
" towers and battlements, and shall enclose
" it with a ditch, &c."

We likewise find the following passage in the Heetopades:

I 2

"What



“What sovereign, whose country is furnished with strong holds, is subject to defeat? The prince of a country without strong holds, is as a man who is an outcast of his tribe. He should build a castle with a large ditch and lofty battlements, and furnish it with machines for raising water, and its situation should be in a wood, or upon a hill, and where there are springs of fresh water, &c.”

Some of those fortresses are by situation so strong as to baffle all the efforts of art in a regular attack, and are only to be reduced by surprise or famine. Such is the fort now called Dowlatabad near Aurengabad, Golcondah near to Hyderabad, Gualior *, and many others. But these

* Gualior, belonging to the Rajah of Ghod, was taken by surprise by the English in 1780 from the Mahrattas, who were then in possession of it.

It stands on a rock, about four English miles in length, of unequal breadth, and nearly flat at the top. The sides are almost perpendicular in every part;



these seem only to have been intended
by the natives as places of retreat in case
of

part; for where the rock is not so naturally, it has been made so by art. The height from the plain below is unequal, but generally from 200 to 300 feet. The rampart that goes round the top conforms to the edge of the precipice. The only ascent is by stone steps, which are defended at the bottom by a wall and towers, and in the way up by seven strong stone gateways, at certain distances from each other. On the top there are many noble buildings, reservoirs for water, and even cultivated land. At the north-west foot of the mountain is a large and well built town.

Gualior was once in possession of the Mahomedans, but was recovered by the Hindoos. Tavernier says, " Elle (la ville) est batie le long d'une montagne qui vers le haut est entourée de murailles avec des tours. Il y a dans cet enclos quelques étangs, que forment les pluyés, et ce que l'on y sème est suffisant pour nourrir la garnison; ce qui fait que cette place est estimée une des meilleures des Indes. Sur la pente de la montagne qui regarde le N. W. Shaw Jehan fit batir une maison de plaifance, d'ou l'on voit toute la ville, et qui peut tenir lieu de forteresse. Au bas de cette maison on voit plusieurs idoles de bas relief taillées dans le roc, les quelles ont toutes la figure de demons, et il y en a une entre autres, d'une hauteur extraordinaire. Depuis que les rois Mahomedans se sont rendus maitres de ce pais-la, cette forteresse est



CSL

of need, and for the security of their families and treasures in times of danger; and not for their usual residence, or the defence of the country.

In open and plain countries, the forts are constructed with high walls, flanked by round towers, and are inclosed by a wet or dry ditch *. The Rajah and his family generally dwell within the fort, nearly adjoining to which is the pettah, or town.

The

“ le lieu ou ils envoient les princes et grands signeurs
“ quand ils veulent s'affurer de leur perfonne.”

TAV. tome iii. page 52.

Gualior refembles other forts that I have feen, being fituated on inaccessible mountains, except by paffages fecured and defended at different places. On the fides of the mountain above the paffage, quantities of ftones are generally to be found piled up, and ready to be tumbled down on the heads of the affailants.

* I have known instances of their having aligators bred in the ditches of their forts, which corresponds with what Pliny mentions. In fpeaking of the different nations of India he fays, *Horata urbs pulchra, foffis*



The place of residence of the Polygar Rajahs, or those whose possessions are in woody and hilly countries, is frequently found surrounded with an impervious thicket, closely planted with bamboos and other thorns. A road leads from the open country through the thicket to an area in the centre of it, sometimes forming a plain of several miles in circumference, on which is the town. Should it be near to mountains, a road similar to the other communicates with them, the entrance to which is commonly defended by a fort, or a deep trench or breast-work. These roads are narrow; prolonged by frequent windings, intersected by barriers; and, when an attack is apprehended, obstructed, by cutting ditches and felling trees. By such frequent interruptions, the progress of troops towards the plain is necessarily slow, during

fossis palustribus munita; per quas crocodili, humani corporis avidissimi, aditum, nisi ponte, non dant. PLIN. lib. vi. cap. 20.



which they are liable to be constantly annoyed by those who may be concealed in the thickets *. Should these difficulties be

* The following is a description of the attack of one of those places, as extracted from a letter of Colonel Fullarton to Lord Macartney and the Council at Madras, contained in his Account of military Operations in the Southern Parts of India, in the Campaigns of 1782, 1783, and 1784 :

“ On our arrival before the town of Shevigerry,
“ he (the Polygar chief) retired to the thickets, near
“ four miles deep, in front of his *Comby*, which they
“ cover and defend. He manned the whole extent of
“ a strong embankment, that separates the wood and
“ open country; was joined by other associated Polygars, and mustered eight or nine thousand men in
“ arms. Finding that they trifled with our proposals,
“ the line was ordered under arms in the morning,
“ and orders were given for the attack. It commenced by the Europeans, and four battalions of
“ Seapoys, moving against the embankment which
“ covers the wood. The Polygars, in full force, opposed us, but our troops remained with their firelocks shouldered, though under a heavy fire, until
“ they approached the embankment, where they gave
“ a general



be surmounted, the last resource of those who are attacked, is to retire to the moun-

“ a general discharge and rushed upon the enemy.
“ By the vigour of this advance, we got possession
“ of the summit, and the Polygars took post on the
“ verge of the adjoining wood, disputing every step
“ with great loss on both sides. As we found the
“ *Comby* could not be approached in front, we pro-
“ ceeded to cut a road through impenetrable thickets
“ for three miles, to the base of the hill that bounds
“ the *Comby* on the west. We continued to cut our
“ way under an unabating fire from 8000 Polygars,
“ who constantly pressed upon our advanced party,
“ rushed upon the line of attack, piked the bullocks
“ that were dragging the guns, and killed many of
“ our people. But these attempts were repulsed by
“ perseverance, and before sunset we had opened a
“ passage entirely to the mountain, which is extremely
“ high, rocky, and in many places almost perpen-
“ dicular. Having resolved to attack from this un-
“ expected quarter, the troops undertook the ser-
“ vice, and attained the summit. The Polygar parties
“ posted to guard that eminence being routed, after
“ much firing we descended on the other side and
“ flanked the *Comby*. The enemy seeing us masters
“ of the mountain, retreated under cover of the
“ night by paths inaccessible to regular troops, and we
“ took possession of this extraordinary recess.”

tains.



tains. Even the common roads through the *Pollams*, or possessions of these Rajahs, have generally thick woods on each side of them, and gateways or barriers across, which, besides serving as a defence, are intended for the purpose of levying duties on merchandise.



S K E T C H V.

Casts, or Tribes.

THE Hindoos are divided into four *casts* or tribes, the *Brabman*, the *Khatry*, the *Bhyse**, and the *Soodera*. These *casts* are at present again separated into two parties, or sects, though we must suppose them to have been originally united. The one is called the Vishnou-Bukht, and the other the Shiva-Bukht, or the followers of Vishnou, and the followers of Shiva. The former distinguish themselves by painting the forehead with a

* The name in Sanskrit is, *Vishvas*; or, as it is pronounced in some parts, *Bishvas*.

horizontal



horizontal line, and the latter with a perpendicular one *.

Accord-

* Beside the four *casts* above mentioned, there is an adventitious tribe or race of people, called in the Sanskrit, Chandalas; and on the coast of Coromandel, Pariars; who are employed in the meanest offices, and have no restrictions with regard to diet. Their number, compared with that of any other *cast*, is inconsiderable, and seems evidently to consist of those persons that have been expelled their *casts*, which is a punishment inflicted for certain offences. Were a Hindoo of any of the other *casts* to touch a Chandala, even by accident, he must wash himself and change his raiment. He would refrain from the productions of the earth, if he knew that they had been cultivated by a Chandala. A Chandala cannot enter a temple, or be present at any religious ceremony. He has no rank in society, and cannot serve in any public employment. Hence the punishment of expulsion, which is supposed in its consequences to extend even to another life, becomes more terrible than that of death.

Strabo and Diodorus Siculus erroneously divide the Hindoos into seven tribes. Into this mistake they have been led by supposing the Vishnou-Bukht, and Shiva-



According to the Hindoo account of the creation, as contained in the sacred books, the Veds *, and explained in different Sastras †, Brahma, or God, having commanded the world *to be*, created Bawaney, who, dancing and finging the praises of the Supreme, dropped from her womb

Shiva-Bukht, together with the Chandalas, to be *tribes* : or, by taking for *tribes*, some of the professions into which the Sooderas are divided.

* The Veds, or as pronounced in some parts of Hindoostan, Beds, and on the coast of Coromandel, Vedams, contain all the principles of their religion, laws, and government, and are supposed to be of divine origin. The Tallinghas, and Malabars or Tamouls, generally change the B into V, and terminate the Sanskrit words with an M.

† Some of the Sastras are commentaries on the Veds, and have been written by different ancient Pundits. The Neetee Sastra is a system of ethics. The Dharma Sastra treats of religious duties, &c.

Pooran, which we often find mentioned, literally signifying *ancient*, is a title given to a variety of works which treat of their gods and heroes.

three



three eggs * upon the ground, from which were produced three beings, Brimha, Vishnou, and Shivah. To the first,

* In the account given of the birth of those three beings, we may find an analogy with the opinions of some Egyptians and Greeks. The Thebans, in comparing the world to an egg, said that it had come out of the mouth of the Supreme Being *. In the verses ascribed to Orpheus, it is said that God having produced a large egg, and broke it, from thence came out the heavens and the earth †. Pythagoras made use of the same allegory; and we are told, that the *Orphiques*, who pretend to have preserved the doctrines of Pythagoras, abstained from eating eggs, as the Brahmans do now. In the orgies of Bacchus, the egg was consecrated, and held in veneration as a symbol of the world, *and of him who contains every thing within himself*. “*Confule initiatos
“liberi patris in quibus hac veneratione ovum co-
“litur, ut ex formâ trecti ac penē sphærat atque un-
“diqueverfum clausâ et includente intra se vitam,
“mundi simulachrum vocatur ‡.*”

* Euseb. Præp. Ev. i. 10.—& lib. iii. c. 11.

† Apud. Athenag. legat. pro Christ. N. 18.

‡ Macrobi. Saturn. viii. cap. 16.



Brahma gave the power of creating the things of this world ; to the second, that of cherishing and preserving them ; and to the third, that of restraining and correcting them.

Brimha created the Brahman from his mouth : his rank was, therefore, the most eminent ; and his business, to perform the rites of religion, and to instruct mankind in their duty.

He next created the Khatry from his arms ; and his duty was to defend the people, to govern, and to command.

He then created the Bhyse from his thighs and belly ; and his business was to provide, and to supply by agriculture and traffic.

The Soodera he created from his feet ; and to him devolved the duty to labour, to serve, and to obey.

He



He then proceeded to create all other animate and inanimate things; and the Supreme Being infused into mankind the principles of piety, of justice, of compassion, and of love; of lust, of avarice, of pride, and of anger; with understanding and reason, to preside over and apply them.

Brimha having reflected within himself, and being inspired by the *principle of wisdom*, wrote rules for the promotion of virtue, and the restraining of vice; fixed the duties of the Brahman, the Khatry, the Bhyse, and the Soodera; and calling these writings *Veds*, he delivered them to the Brahman, with power to read and to explain them *.

The

* "The natural duty of the Brahman is peace, self-restraint, patience, rectitude, wisdom, and learning."

"The



The Brahmans shed no blood, nor eat any thing that has had life in it *; their diet is rice and other vegetables, prepared with a kind of butter called ghee †, and with

“ The natural duties of the Khatry are, bravery, glory, not to flee from the field, rectitude, generosity, and princely conduct.”

“ The natural duty of the Bhyse is, to cultivate the land, to tend the cattle, to buy and sell.”

“ The natural duty of the Soodera is, servitude.”

“ A man being contented with his own particular lot and situation, obtaineth perfection.”

“ A man by following the duties which are appointed by his birth, doeth no wrong.”

“ A man's own calling ought not to be forsaken.”

Bhagvat Geeta.

Only the Brahmans may read the Veds; the Khatries may hear them read; but the other *castes* may only hear the Sastras, or Commentaries on the Veds.

* Porphiry and Clement of Alexandria, speaking of the ancient Brahmans, say, they drank no wine, nor eat any animal food.

† *Ghee* is butter melted and refined, which, thus prepared, may be kept a considerable time, even in a hot climate.



ginger and other spices; but they consider milk as the purest food, as coming from the cow, an animal for whose species they have a sacred veneration.

This veneration for the ox may have been ordained, to preserve from slaughter an animal that is of so great utility to mankind, particularly in Hindostan, which is productive but of few horses, comparatively with the extent of the country, and the number of its inhabitants. The veneration in which the ox was held by the Egyptians, may have been borrowed from the Hindoos, or may have arisen from the same cause, which may likewise have given birth to *the bull of Zoroaster*. Cicero observes, that it was the utility of certain animals that occasioned their being worshipped by the Egyptians and other nations*. Plutarch

* “ Ipsi, qui irridentur Egyptii, nullam belluam, nisi
“ ob aliquam utilitatem quam ex ea caperent consecra-
“ runt,



tarch says nearly the same thing*. A similar regard seems to have been shewn for the ox by the Phenicians. Porphiry says, that a Phenician would sooner eat a piece of human flesh than taste that of an ox †. In the early ages of Athens it appears, that not only this animal, but all beasts of labour were reserved from slaughter, even from being offered in sacrifice, and which was one of the laws renewed by Draco.—In the code of Gentoo laws we find, besides preserving the animal from being killed, “ that if any one shall exact labour from
“ a bullock that is hungry or thirsty, or
“ oblige him to labour when fatigued or
“ out of season, the magistrate shall fine
“ him.”

All Brahmans are not priests, yet all priests are Brahmans. Those who are not

“ runt, concludam belluas a barbaris propter beneficium
“ consecratas.” Cic. de Nat. Deor. Lib. I. N. 37.

* Plut. de Isid. et Osir.

† Porph. de Abst. 11.

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of



of the order of the priesthood, whether followers of Vishnou or of Shiva, may serve, but not in menial offices ; we often find them acting as secretaries, and superintendants, to persons of high rank, as factors to bankers and merchants : and there are instances of Brahmans being first ministers, not only to Hindoo princes, but even to Mahomedans, being preferred for their knowledge, sobriety of manners, and constant application. Some even bear arms, but none of these can be admitted into the priesthood, and, in their appearance, they are only distinguished from the other Hindoos by the mark on their forehead. They likewise, however, abstain from animal food ; and they meet with respect from the members of the other *casts*, though not in so great a degree as the priests. But those who are of the priesthood, confine their attention to the performance of religious ceremonies, to the service of the temples, to study, and to the education of youth.

The



The priests never carry weapons of any kind, nor is it supposed to be fit for them to employ them, even in their own defence. They are patiently to submit to violence, and leave it to God and the laws to avenge them.

But throughout these laws, which were most probably composed by the Brahmans, reigns an uncommon degree of partiality to their *cast*. They claim a pre-eminence in rank, even to their princes, or *rajahs*, who are of the second, or Khatry *cast*. A *rajah* will receive, and taste with respect, the food prepared by a Brahman, but a Brahman dare not eat of any thing that may have been touched by one of another *cast*. In the administration of justice, the punishment of a Brahman for any crime is milder, and in general of a less disgraceful nature, than that of another man for the same offence; and they have descended to the most minute circumstances, in order



to preserve that deference and respect which they have established as their due.

It is said, in their laws, “ If a Brahman
“ commit a crime deserving of a capital
“ punishment, the magistrate shall, to
“ prevent his committing a similar crime
“ in future, sentence him to perpetual im-
“ prisonment.—There is no crime in the
“ world so great as that of murdering a
“ Brahman; and therefore no magistrate
“ shall ever desire the death of a Brahman,
“ or cut off one of his limbs.

“ Whatever orders such Brahmans as
“ are Pundits shall deliver to the Ryuts
“ from the Saffra, the Ryuts shall ac-
“ knowledge and obey.

“ If a Soodera give much, and fre-
“ quent, molestation to a Brahman, the
“ magistrate shall put him to death.

“ If



“ If a Brahman go to wait on a
“ prince, the servants and *derbans* shall
“ not obstruct his entrance, but give him
“ a ready admission.

“ If a Brahman be passenger in a boat,
“ he shall not pay any thing to the water-
“ man; and he shall enter and leave the
“ boat before any other of the passen-
“ gers,” &c.

In settling precedence, and making way
on the road, all are obliged to yield to the
Brahmans*.

The functions of royalty devolve with-
out exception on the Khattry *cast*; and

* Diodorus Siculus, in speaking of the casts
among the Hindoos, says, “ Primum est philosopho-
“ rum qui ceteris, numero pauciores, supereminent
“ dignitate. Hi ab omni opere immunes, neque
“ serviunt cuiquam neque imperant.”

Diod. Siculus, Lib. II. cap. x.



the possessions and authority of their *rajahs* are hereditary, descending in the line of legitimate *male* primogeniture. But as the right of blood descends only to *this* degree, in default thereof the prince may adopt any one of his kinsmen to be his successor *, who, from the time of his adoption, obtains the rights and the appellation of his son.

The younger branches of the families of *rajahs* generally serve in a military capacity, and have sometimes lands given them, which they hold by a feudal tenure.

All commercial transactions are committed to the *Bhyse*, or *Bannian*.

* Instances of this kind frequently occur. *Viziam-ram-rauze*, the present *rajah* of *Vizianagaram*, was adopted in preference to his elder brother *Sittaram-rauze*.

The



The Soodera *cast* is by far more numerous than all the other casts together, and comprises the artisan, and the labourer of every kind. The mechanics and artisans are again divided into as many classes as there are professions. Ninety-eight subdivisions of the different casts have been reckoned by the Danish missionaries, who have given an account of their names, and different employments *. All follow the professions of their fathers. None can quit the class he belongs to, or be admitted, or marry, into another: and hence probably that resemblance that some have pretended to observe in each class, as if composing one great family.

The cheerful resignation of the Soodera to his inferior state in society, with the impossibility of rising above it, besides the effect of education, may be ascribed to the influence of his religion. He is taught by it to be-

* De la Croze, Hist. du Christ. des Indes.



lieve that he is placed in the sphere he now moves in, by way of trial, or for offences committed in a former life, and that by piety and resignation he will enjoy greater happiness in another.

Though the other *casts* enjoy greater liberty with respect to diet than the Brahmans, yet they scrupulously refrain from what is forbidden them, and will not partake of what may have been provided by any of an inferior *cast*, or different religion *.

They

* Were a Hindoo to break those rules, he would be expelled from his cast. It having been found requisite to send some regiments of Seapoys from one English settlement to another by sea, those who were Hindoos were permitted to provide and carry with them water and provisions for their own particular use : but one of the ships happening to be longer in the passage than had been expected, nothing remained to them, for several days before their arrival at land, but a very small quantity of dry rice to each daily, without water to dress it, and scarcely more than sufficient to wet their mouths; yet they could not be prevailed on to taste



They may eat fish and flesh, but not of all kinds indifferently; and to abstain from them is considered a virtue, as may be observed in the following passage of the Heetopades*:

taste the other water or provisions that were on board, though almost expiring from thirst and want of nourishment.

* The Heetopades, Heetopadefā, or Apologues of Vishnou-Sarma, an ancient Brahman, was translated from the Sanskrit by Mr. Charles Wilkins, and published in 1787. Mr. Wilkins says, that the meaning of the word is, *useful instruction*. Sir William Jones acquaints us, in a discourse to the society of Calcutta, "That the fables of Vishnou-Sarma, improperly called the fables of Pilpay, are the most beautiful and ancient collection of apologues in the world, and are now extant under different names in various languages. That they appear to have been first translated from the Sanskrit in the sixth century, by Buzerchumihir, chief physician, and afterwards vizir, to the great Anushirwan, king of Persia." Mr. Wilkins observes, that the Persian version of Abul Mala Nasser Alla Mustofi, made in the 515th year of the Hegira, was translated into French with the title of *Les conseils et les maximes de Pilpay, philosophe Indien, sur les divers états de la vie*; and that this resembles the original more than any other translation he has seen.

" Those



“Those who have forsaken the killing
“of all; those whose houses are a sanc-
“tuary to all; they are in the way to
“heaven.”

No Hindoo of any of the four *casts* is allowed, by his religion, to taste any intoxicating liquor; it is only drank by strangers, dancers, players, and Chandalahs, or outcasts; and the wine or liquor mentioned by Quintus Curtius we are at a loss to account for, unless it were the *toddy*, or juice of the cocoa, the *palmyra*, and date tree, which, before it be fermented, is of a cooling purgative quality, and drank on that account*.

That

* The three species of the palm tree that I have mentioned, are in great abundance over almost the whole peninsula and islands of India.

The *cocoa*, which is the first in rank, is perhaps of more universal use to man, than any other tree the earth produces. It generally grows almost perfectly straight, is from thirty to forty feet high, and about a
foot



That the Hindoos retain their original
character and manners, notwithstanding
ing

foot in diameter. It has no branches; but about a dozen leaves spring immediately from the trunk near the top, which are about ten feet long, and, at the bottom of the leaf, from two to three in breadth. These leaves serve to cover the houses of the common classes of the natives, to make mats for them to sit and lie upon; with the finest fibres of the leaf, very beautiful mats are made, that are bought by the rich; the coarse fibres are made into brooms; and the stem of the leaf, which is about as thick as a man's ankle, is used for fuel. The wood of the tree when fresh cut, is spongy; but this, as well as that of the *palmyra* tree, becomes hard by being kept, and attains a dark brown colour.—On the top of the tree, a large shoot is found, which, when boiled, resembles brocalo, but is perhaps of a more delicate taste, and though much liked, is seldom eat by the natives, as, on cutting it, the pith being left exposed, the tree dies. Between this shoot and the leaves spring several buds, from which, on making an incision, distils a juice, differing little either in colour or consistence from water. Men, whose business it is, climb to the tops of the trees in the evening, with earthen pots tied round their waists, which they fix to receive this juice, and take away early in the morning before



ing the conquest of their country by strangers, is owing to the religious observ-

before the sun has had any influence on it. The liquor, thus drawn, is generally called *Tary*, and by the English *Toddy*. It is in this state cooling, and of a sweet agreeable taste—after being kept a few hours, it begins to ferment, acquires a sharper taste, and a slighter intoxicating quality. By boiling it, a coarse kind of sugar is made; and by distillation it yields a strong spirit, which being every where sold, and at a low price, contributes not a little to ruin the health of our soldiers. The name given to this spirit by the English is *Parriar arrack*, as it is drank by the Parriars or outcasts.—The trees from which the *toddy* is drawn, do not bear any fruit; but if the buds be left entire, they produce clusters of the *cocoa-nut*. This nut, in the husk, is full as large as a man's head; and, when once ripe, falls with the least wind.—When fresh gathered it is green on the outside; the husk and the shell are tender. The shell when divested of the husk may be about the size of an ostrich's egg; it is lined with a white pulpy substance, and contains about a pint, or a pint and a half, of liquor like water, and though the taste be sweet and agreeable, it is different from that of the *toddy*.



observance of their rules and customs,
from which no hope of advantage, or
fear

In proportion as the fruit grows old, or is kept, the shell hardens, the liquor diminishes, and is at last entirely absorbed by the white pulpy substance, which gradually attains the hardness of the kernel of the almond, and is almost as easily detached from the shell. The Indians use this nut in their cookery.—From it great quantities of the purest and best lamp oil is pressed; and the substance, after it has been pressed, serves to feed poultry and hogs, and is found an excellent nourishment for them. Cups, and a variety of small utensils, are made of the shell.—The husk is at least an inch in thickness, and being composed of strong fibres that easily separate, it furnishes all the Indian cordage.

The *palmyra*, or as it is called by the Portuguese (from whom the English, as in many other instances, have borrowed the name) the *palmeiro-brabo*, is taller than the *cocoa*, greater quantities of toddy are drawn from it; for though a small fruit which it yields be sometimes eat, and is thought wholesome, yet it is but little sought after. This tree, like the *cocoa*, has no branches, but only a few large leaves quite at the top, which are also employed to thatch houses, and to make mats and umbrellas.



fear of punishment, can possibly engage them to depart.

umbrellas. The timber of this tree is much used in building.

The *date-tree* is not so tall as the *cocoa*. The fruit never arrives to maturity in India; toddy is drawn from it, but neither in such quantity, nor of so good a quality, as that which is procured from the two former species. Indeed, the Indian date-tree is but of little value, comparatively with even the *palmyra*, though that be inferior to the *cocoa*.



S K E T C H VI.

Religion of the Hindoos.

WHATEVER opinion may be formed of the Hindoo religion itself, we cannot deny its professors the merit of having adhered to it with a constancy unequalled in the history of any other. The number of those who have been induced or compelled to quit their doctrines, notwithstanding the long period of their subjection, and the persecutions they have undergone, is too inconsiderable to bear any proportion to the number of those who have adhered to them.

It is a circumstance very singular, and merits particular attention, that, contrary

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to



to the practice of every other religious society, the Hindoos, far from disturbing those who are of a different faith, by endeavours to convert them, cannot even admit any profelytes; and that, notwithstanding the exclusion of others, and though tenacious of their own doctrines, they neither hate, nor despise, nor pity, such as are of a different belief, nor do they think them less favoured by the Supreme Being than themselves. They say, that if the Author of the universe preferred one religion to another, *that only* could prevail which he approved; because to suppose such preference, while we see so many different religions, would be the height of impiety, as it would be supposing injustice towards those that he left ignorant of his will; and they therefore conclude, that every religion is peculiarly adapted to the country and people where it is practised, and that all, in their original purity, are equally acceptable to God.

The



The Brahmans *, who translated from the Sanskrit language the laws and customs of the Hindoos, say, in the preliminary discourse prefixed to their work ;

“ From men of enlightened understand-
“ ings and sound judgment, who, in their
“ researches after truth, have swept away
“ from their hearts malice and opposition,
“ it is not concealed that the diversities of
“ belief, which are causes of enmity and
“ envy to the ignorant, are in fact a de-
“ monstration of the power of the Supreme
“ Being.”

“ The truly intelligent well know, that
“ the difference and variety of created
“ things, and the contrarieties of constitu-
“ tions, are types of *his* wonderful attri-
“ butes, whose complete power formed all
“ things in the animal, vegetable, and ma-
“ terial world ; whose benevolence selected
“ man to have dominion and authority over

* See SKETCH II.



“ the rest; who, having bestowed on him
“ judgment and understanding, gave him
“ supremacy over the corners of the world;
“ who, having put into his hands the con-
“ trol and disposal of all things, appointed
“ to each nation its own religion; and who
“ instituted a variety of tribes, and a mul-
“ tiplicity of different customs, but views
“ with pleasure in every place the mode of
“ worship particularly appointed to it; he
“ is with the attendants upon the mosque,
“ in counting the sacred beads; and he is
“ in the temple with the Hindoos, at the
“ adoration of the idols.”

However the intention of those idols may have been corrupted in a long course of practice by the ignorant multitude, or artful priests, they, as well as their various deities, seem evidently to have been only designed to shew the attributes of a Being of whom we cannot form any precise or simple idea, and who cannot be represented under any particular shape; neither have they



they any image of Brama *, or God, who they sometimes call the *Principle of Truth*, the *Spirit of Wisdom*, the *Supreme Being*, the *Universal Soul that penetrates every thing*, and epithets of the same kind. They say, "that the mind may form some conception "of his attributes, when brought separately "before it; but who can grasp *the whole* "within the limited circle of human "ideas?

Saint Francis Xavier says, that a Brahman on the coast of Malabar confided to him, that one of the mysteries or secrets of the Hindoo doctrines consisted in believing that there was only one God, creator of the

* See SKETCH V. Mr. de la Croze, however, mentions to have seen a Hindoo painting of a *triangle, enclosed in a circle*, which was said to be intended as an emblematical indication of the Supreme Being: but he observes, that this is not as a thing to worship, and that no image is ever made of God. Hist. du Christ. des Indes.



heavens and the earth, and that only *that* God was worthy to be adored *.

Bernier, who was an attentive traveller, a faithful narrator, and who, if we make allowances for the prejudices of the age in which he lived, may be considered as a judicious observer, gives the following account of a conversation he had with some of the principal *pundits* at Benares, upon the subject of the worship of idols among the Hindoos.

“ Lorsque je descendis le long du Gange,
“ et que je passai par Benares, j’allai trouver
“ le chef des Pundets qui fait là sa demeure
“ ordinaire. C’est un religieux tellement
“ renommé pour son savoir, que Chah
“ Jehan †, tant pour sa science que pour
“ complaire aux Rajas, lui fit pension de

* Lib. I. Ep. 5.

† The father of Aurengzebe: his name is generally written by the English, Shaw Jehan.



“deux mille roupies. C'etoit un gros
“homme, très bien fait, et qu'on re-
“gardeoit avec plaisir: pour tout vêtement
“il n'avoit qu'une espee d'écharpe
“blanche de foye, qui étoit liée à l'entour
“de sa ceinture, et qui pendoit jusqu'à
“mi-jambe, avec un autre écharpe rouge,
“de foye, assez large, qu'il avoit sur ses
“épaules comme un petit manteau. Je
“l'avois vu plusieurs fois à Delhi dans
“cette posture, devant le Roi, dans l'As-
“semblée de tous les Omrahs, et marcher
“par les rues tantôt à pied tantôt en Palcky*.
“Je l'avois aussi vu, et j'avois conversé
“plusieurs fois avec lui, parceque pen-
“dant un an il s'étoit toujours trouvé à
“notre conférence devant mon Agah, à
“qui il faisoit la cour, afin qu'il lui fit
“redonner sa pension, qu' Aurengzebe,
“parvenu à l'Empire, lui avoit otée, pour
“paroître grand Musulman. Dans la

* Called by the English *Palankeen*, though the man-
ner in which the French write and pronounce it, is
more correct.—The natives call it *Palkee*.



“visite que je lui rendis à Benares, il me
“fit cent caresses, et me donna même la
“collation dans la Bibliothèque de son
“Université avec les six plus fameux Pun-
“dets de la ville. Quand je me vis en si
“bonne compagnie, je les priaï tous, de
“me dire leur sentiment sur l’adoration de
“leurs Idoles; car je leur disois que je
“m’en allois des Indes extrêmement scan-
“dalisé de ce côté là, et leur reprochois
“que c’étoit une chose contre toute forte
“de raison et tout à fait indigne de gens
“savans et Philosophes comme eux :”

“Nous avons véritablement, me dirent
“ils, dans nos temples, quantité de sta-
“tues diverses, comme celle de Brahma *,
“Mahadeu, Genich, et Gavani †, qui
“font des principaux et des plus parfaits
“*Deutas*, et meme de quantité d’autres
“de moindre perfection, auxquelles nous

* This, I presume, is a mistake; Bernier probably meant *Brimba*.

† Probably, Bawany.

“rendons



“ rendons beaucoup d'honneur, nous nous
“ prosternons devant elles, et leur presen-
“ tons des fleurs, du ris, des huiles, de
“ senteurs, du safran et autres choses sem-
“ blables avec beaucoup de cérémonie:
“ néanmoins, nous ne croyons point que
“ ces statues soient ou Brahma même, ou
“ Béchen * lui même, et ainsi des autres,
“ mais seulement leurs images et represen-
“ tations, et nous ne leur rendons ces hon-
“ neurs qu'à cause de ce qu'elles repre-
“ sentent; elles sont dans nos *Deuras* †,
“ afin qu' il y ait quelque chose devant les
“ yeux qui arrête l'esprit; et quand nous
“ prions, ce n'est pas la statue que nous
“ prions, mais celui qui est représenté par
“ la statue: au reste nous reconnoissons
“ que c'est Dieu qui est le maître absolu et
“ le seul Tout-puissant.”

Mr. Ziegenbalg, one of the first missiona-
ries that was sent by the king of Denmark

* Vishen, or Vishnou. † Dewuls, or temples.



to Tranquebar *, and who may be named the protestant apostle of India, having asked, in writing, from different Brahmans, the reason of their not offering worship to the Supreme Being, they uniformly re-

* Tranquebar was granted to the Danes, by the Rajah of Tanjour, in 1621.—The king of Denmark having applied to M. Francke, professor of theology at Halle, to recommend persons fit to be sent as missionaries to India, selected M. Ziegenbalg and M. Plutchau. They sailed from Copenhagen the 29th of November 1705, and arrived at Tranquebar the 9th of July 1706. M. Plutchau, after a few years residence, returned to Europe, and remained there. M. Ziegenbalg visited Europe in 1715; came from Denmark to England, embarked there the 4th of March 1716, landed at Madras the 9th of August of the same year, and died at Tranquebar the 23d of February 1719. He translated into the Malabar, or Tamoul language, the whole of the New Testament, and at his death had nearly completed a translation of the Old. He wrote a Malabar grammar, that was printed at Halle; and a dictionary, that was printed at Tranquebar in 1712, which then contained 20,000 words, and was afterwards augmented. Vid. Hist. du Christ. des Indes, par le Croze.



plied, that God was a Being without shape, incomprehensible, of whom no precise idea could be formed; and that the adoration before idols, being ordained by their religion, God would receive, and consider that as adoration offered to himself.

Some learned men, or pundits, that he calls *Gnanigneuls*, who have written on the *Nargbenny worship*, or worship of the invisible, have no other object of adoration but that Being; and their books treat only of the love of God, and duties of morality. He gives some literal translations of passages from their writings.

“The Being of beings is the only God,
“eternal, and every where present, who
“comprises every thing; there is no God
“but thee.”

“O Sovereign of all beings, Lord of the
“Heavens and the Earth, before whom
“shall I deplore my wretchedness, if thou
“abandon me *?”

* From a book named *Vara-baddu*.



“ God is, as upon a sea without bounds ;
“ those who wish to approach him must
“ appease the agitation of the waves—they
“ must be of a tranquil and steady mind,
“ retired within themselves, and their
“ thoughts being collected, must be fixed
“ on God only *.”

In a letter written to M. Ziegenbalg, by a Brahman, he says, “ God may be known
“ by his laws, and wonderful works. By
“ the reason and understanding he has
“ given to man, and by the creation and
“ preservation of all beings. It is indis-
“ pensably the duty of man, to believe in
“ God, and love him.—Our law enjoins
“ this.—Those two principles ought to be
“ in his speech, in his mind; they should
“ guide all his actions, in which being well
“ founded, he should invoke God, and en-
“ deavour in every thing to conform him-
“ self to his will.”

* From a book named Tchiva-Vackkium.



A Hindoo having been converted to Christianity by the Danish missionaries, his father wrote to him, " You are yet unacquainted with the mysteries of our religion.—We do not worship many Gods in the extravagant manner you imagine.—In all the multitude of images, we adore one Divine essence only. We have amongst us learned men, to whom you should apply, and who will remove all your doubts *."

M. de la Croze, in speaking from the authority of M. Ziegenbalg, and another missionary, M. J. E. Grundler, says, " In one of their books, they (the Hindoos) express themselves in the following manner : The Supreme Being is invisible, incomprehensible, immoveable, without figure or shape. No one has ever seen him ; time never comprised him ; his essence pervades every thing ; all was derived from him, &c."

* Hist. du Christ. des Indes, tome ii. liv. 6.



Father Bouchet, superior of the Jesuit missionaries, writes to the bishop of Avranches, from Madura, in the Carnatick.

“ The Indians acknowledge one eternal
“ God, infinitely perfect.”

“ They say, that the great number of di-
“ vinities which they worship, are only in-
“ ferior deities, entirely subject to the will
“ of the Supreme Being, who is equally
“ Lord of gods and men *.”

Sir William Jones observes, “ The
“ learned Hindoos, as they are instructed
“ by their own books, in truth acknow-
“ ledge only one Supreme Being, whom
“ they call *Brahm*, or the *great one*, in the
“ neuter gender. They believe his essence
“ to be infinitely removed from the com-
“ prehension of any mind but his own,
“ and they suppose him to manifest his

* Lettres Edif. et Cur. 12mo. edit. de Paris, 1781.
tome ii.

“ power



“ power by the operation of his divine
“ spirit *.”

The vulgar, whose understandings are only exercised by the usual occupations and occurrences in their particular spheres of life; and the feeble, or ignorant, among the higher ranks of mankind, instead of going into speculative reflections, naturally fix their attention on the external object that is presented to them, which, aided with a little art, gradually leads them into a superstitious veneration of things, to which an inquiring and thinking mind easily understands that none is due. Nor need we go to Hindostan for instances of the truth of this assertion.

If we, therefore, abstract our minds from the abuses, and inquire into the spirit, of

* Asiatic Researches, vol. i.



the Hindoo religion, we shall find, that it inculcates the belief in one God only, without beginning and without end; nor can any thing be more sublime than their idea of the Supreme Being. I shall quote some stanzas from a hymn to Narrayna, or the Spirit of God, taken, as Sir William Jones informs us, from the writings of their ancient authors.

Spirit of Spirits, who, through ev'ry part
Of space expanded, and of endless time,
Beyond the reach of lab'ring thought sublime,
Badst uproar into beauteous order start;
Before heav'n was, thou art.

Ere spheres beneath us roll'd, or spheres above,
Ere earth in firmamental æther hung,
Thou sat'st alone, till, through thy mystic love,
Things unexisting to existence sprung,
And grateful descant sung.

Omniscient Spirit, whose all-ruling pow'r
Bids from each sense bright emanations beam;
Glow in the rainbow, sparkles in the stream,
Smiles in the bud, and glistens in the flow'r
That crowns each vernal bow'r;

Sighs



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Sighs in the gale, and warbles in the throat
Of every bird that hails the bloomy spring,
Or tells his love in many a liquid note,
Whilst envious artists touch the rival string,
Till rocks and forests ring;

Breathes in rich fragrance from the Sandal grove,
Or where the precious musk-deer playful rove;
In dulcet juice, from clust'ring fruit distils,
And burns salubrious in the tasteful clove;

Soft banks and verd'rous hills
Thy present influence fills;
In air, in floods, in caverns, woods, and plains,
Thy will inspirits all, thy sovereign Maya reigns:

Blue crystal vault, and elemental fires,
That in th' æthereal fluid blaze and breathe;
Thou, tossing main, whose snaky branches wreath
This penfile orb with intertwisting gyres;
Mountains, whose lofty spires,
Presumptuous, rear their fummits to the skies,
And blend their em'rald hue with sapphire light;
Smooth meads and lawns, that glow with varying dyes
Of dew-bespangled leaves and blossoms bright,
Hence! vanish from my sight
Delusive pictures! unsubstantial shows!
My soul absorb'd one only Being knows,
Of all perceptions one abundant source,
Whence ev'ry object, ev'ry moment flows:

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Suns



Suns hence derive their force,
Hence planets learn their course;
But suns and fading worlds I view no more;
God only I perceive; God only I adore.

Brimha, Vishnou, and Shiva, are undoubtedly only emblems of the power, the goodness, and justice of the Supreme Being, and are sometimes called *the three united in one* *.

In the dialogues between Krishna and Arjoon, contained in the Bhagvat Geeta, Krishna says: "I am the creator of all things, and all things proceed from me. Those who are endued with spiritual wisdom know this, and worship me."

"I am the soul, which is in the bodies of all things. I am the beginning and the end. I am time; I am all-grasping

* Some of the early Roman Catholic Missionaries thought they perceived in the allegory of Brimha, Vishnou, and Shivah, a belief in the Holy Trinity.

" death;



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“ death ; and I am the resurrection. I
“ am the seed of all things in nature,
“ and there is not any thing animate or
“ inanimate without me.

“ I am the mystic figure *Oom**, the
“ *Reek*, the *Sam*, and the *Yayoor Veds*.
“ I am the witness, the comforter, the
“ asylum, the friend. I am generation,
“ and dissolution : in me all things are re-
“ posited.

“ The whole universe was spread abroad
“ by me.

“ The foolish are unacquainted with my
“ supreme and divine nature. They are

* *Oom* is said to be a mystic word, or emblem, to signify the Deity, and to be composed of Sanskrit roots, or letters ; the first of which stands for Creator ; the second, Preserver ; and the third Destroyer. It is forbidden to be pronounced, except with extreme reverence. An analogy has been found between this monosyllable and the Egyptian *On*. WILKINS.

M 2

“ of



“ of vain hope, of vain endeavours, and
“ void of reason; whilst those of true
“ wisdom serve me in their hearts, undi-
“ verted by other gods.

“ Those who worship other gods, wor-
“ ship me. I am in the sacrifice, in the
“ spices, in the invocation, in the fire, and
“ in the victim.”

Arjoon says in reply: “ Thou art the
“ prime Creator—Eternal God! Thou art
“ the Supreme! By thee the universe was
“ spread abroad! Thou art Vayoo, the
“ god of the winds; Agnee, the god of
“ fire; Varoon, the god of the oceans,
“ &c.

“ Reverence be unto thee; again and
“ again reverence, O thou, who art all in
“ all! Great is thy power, and great thy
“ glory! Thou art the father of all things;
“ where-



RELIGION.

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“ wherefore I bow down, and with my
“ body prostrate on the ground, crave thy
“ mercy. Lord, worthy to be adored!
“ bear with me as a father with a son ; a
“ friend with a friend ; a lover with the
“ beloved.”

In speaking of serving the Deity, Krishna
says :

“ They who delighting in the welfare
“ of all nature, serve me in my incor-
“ ruptible, ineffable, and invisible form ;
“ omnipotent, incomprehensible, standing
“ on high, fixed, and immoveable, with
“ subdued passions, and who are the same
“ in all things, shall come unto me.

“ Those whose minds are attached to
“ my invisible nature, have the greater
“ labour, because an invisible path is dif-
“ ficult to corporeal beings. Place thy
“ heart on me, and penetrate me with thy
“ understanding, and thou shalt hereafter
“ enter unto me. But if thou shouldst

M 3

“ be



“ be unable at once stedfastly to fix thy
“ mind on me, endeavour to find me by
“ means of constant practice.

“ He, my servant, is dear to me, who
“ is free from enmity; merciful, and ex-
“ empt from pride and selfishness; who
“ is the same in pain and in pleasure;
“ patient of wrongs; contented; and
“ whose mind is fixed on me alone.

“ He is my beloved, of whom man-
“ kind is not afraid, and who is not afraid
“ of mankind; who is unsolicitous about
“ events; to whom praise and blame are
“ as one; who is of little speech; who is
“ pleased with whatever cometh to pass;
“ who has no particular home, and is of
“ a steady mind.”

In treating of good works, he says:

“ Both the desertion and practice of
“ works, are the means of happiness.

“ But



RELIGION.

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“ But of the two, the practice is to be
“ distinguished above the desertion.

“ The man, who, performing the duties
“ of life, and quitting all interest in them,
“ placeth them upon *Brahm*, the Supreme,
“ is not tainted with sin, but remaineth like
“ the leaf of the lotus unaffected by the
“ waters.

“ Let not the motive be in the event :
“ be not one of those, whose motive for
“ action is in the hope of reward.

“ Let not thy life be spent in inaction :
“ perform thy duty, and abandon all
“ thoughts of the consequence. The
“ miserable and unhappy are so about the
“ event of things; but men, who are en-
“ dued with true wisdom, are unmindful
“ of the event.”

The Hindoos believe, that the soul, after
death, is tried, and, according to the con-

M 4

duct



duct of the deceased, is either rewarded or punished. That the souls of such holy men as have arrived to that degree of perfection as entirely to have subdued their passions are immediately, and without trial, admitted to eternal happiness. That the souls of the wicked, after being confined for a time in *Narekha* *, and punished according to their offences, are sent back upon the stage of life, to animate other bodies, of men or beasts. That even those whose lives have been chequered with good and evil, must likewise return : And that these probations, chastisements, and transmigrations, continue to be repeated, until every vicious inclination be corrected. They shudder at the idea of eternal punishment, as incompatible with their notions of the justice and goodness of the Almighty.

* *Narekha* is the name given to the infernal regions, which are supposed to be divided into a variety of places adapted to different degrees of punishment.



It is pretended that a few holy men, by special divine grace, have a knowledge of, or are able to look back on their former states of existence.

It seems also to be a prevalent opinion with them, that this world, besides being a state of probation, is likewise a state of temporary reward and punishment. They say, "It cannot be denied that the benefits which some enjoy, are in recompence of their former virtues; but should these, in a new life, forget God, and disobey his laws, their former conduct will not avail them, they will be again tried and judged according to their actions." Nearly the same sentiments were professed by many of the Greek philosophers.

Notwithstanding that the Hindoos are separated into the *Viſhnou Bukht* and *Shivab Bukht*, and that a variety of sects are to be found over the whole peninsula, the chief articles of their religion are



are uniform. All believe in *Brahma*, or the Supreme Being; in the immortality of the soul; in a future state of rewards and punishments; in the doctrine of the metempsychosis; and all acknowledge the *Veds* as containing the principles of their laws and religion. Nor ought we to wonder at the schisms that have arisen in such a vast space of time, but rather be surprised, that they have been so mild in their consequences; especially when we reflect on the numbers that arose amongst ourselves, and the dreadful effects they produced in a period so much shorter.

Their rules of morality are most benevolent; and hospitality and charity are not only strongly inculcated, but I believe nowhere more universally practised than amongst the Hindoos.

“ Hospitality is commanded to be exercised even towards an enemy, when he cometh into thine house: the tree doth
“ not



“ not withdraw its shade even from the
“ wood-cutter.

“ Good men extend their charity unto
“ the vilest animals. The moon doth not
“ withhold her light even from the cot-
“ tage of the Chandala *.

“ Is this one of us, or is he a stranger?
“ —Such is the reasoning of the ungene-
“ rous: but to those by whom liberality
“ is practised, the whole world is but as
“ one family.”

I shall conclude this chapter with an-
other passage from the Heetopades, the
valuable truth of which seems, happily,
to be understood by them. — “ There is
“ one friend, *Religion*, who attendeth even
“ in death, though all other things go to
“ decay like the body.”

* Outcast.



S K E T C H VII.

Mythology of the Hindoos.

NOTwithstanding what has been said in the foregoing Sketch, it must be owned, that the multitude believe in the existence of inferior deities, which, like the divinities of the Greeks and Romans, are represented under different forms, and with symbols expressive of their different qualities and attributes: all these are however supposed to be inferior to the triad, *Brimba*, *Vishnou*, and *Shiva*.

Bawaney*, as the mother of the gods, is held in high veneration, but the other goddesses

* Bawaney, or *Bhavani*, (for I suppose the name to mean the same divinity, and to be only a different mode



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goddeffes are always represented as the subordinate powers of their respective lords.

Brimba is said to mean, in Sanskrit, the wisdom of God. He is represented with a crown upon his head, and with four hands: in one he holds a sceptre; in another the *Veds**; in a third a ring, or circle, as an emblem of eternity; and the fourth is empty, being ready to assist and protect his works. Near his image is the *banse*, or *flamingo*, on which he is supposed to perform his journeys.

His goddeffs Serafwaty is the patroness of imagination and invention, of harmony and eloquence. She is usually represented with a musical instrument in her hand;

mode of spelling or pronouncing it,) likewise appears in a variety of other characters, as the consort of Maha-Diva, &c.

* See SKETCH V.

and



and is supposed to have invented the Devanagry letters, and the Sanskrit language, in which the divine laws were conveyed to mankind.

Sweet grace of Brimha's bed !
Thou, when thy glorious lord
Bade airy nothing breathe and blest his pow'r;
Sat't with illumin'd head,
And, in sublime accord,
Seven frightly notes to hail th' auspicious hour,
Led't from their secret bow'r :
They drank the air ; they came
With many a sparkling glance,
And knit the mazy dance,
Like you bright orbs, that gird the solar flame,
Now parted, now combin'd,
Clear as thy speech, and various as thy mind.

Young passions, at the fount,
In shadowy forms arose,
O'er hearts, yet uncreated, sure to reign :
Joy, that o'erleaps all bounds,
Grief, that in silence grows,
Hope, that with honey blends the cup of pain,
Pale fear, and stern disdain,
Grim wrath's avenging band,
Love, nurs'd in dimple smooth,
That ev'ry pang can foeth.

Thee,



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Thee, her great parents owns,
All ruling eloquence ;
That, like full Ganga, pours her stream divine,
Alarming states and thrones :
To fix the flying fense
Of words, thy daughters, by the varied line,
(Stupendous art !) was thine ;
Thine, with the pointed reed *,
To give primeval truth
Th' unfading bloom of youth,

And

* The pen employed by the Hindoos to write on paper is a small reed. To write on leaves, which is the usual method, they employ a pointed iron instrument, with which, properly speaking, they engrave; the leaves are generally of the palm-tree; they are cut into long regular stripes, about an inch broad; being of a thick substance, and smooth hard surface, they may be kept for almost any space of time, and the letters have the advantage of not being liable to be effaced or grow fainter. Their books consist of a number of those leaves, which by a hole pierced at one end are tied loosely together. After the writing is finished, they sometimes rub the leaves with a black powder, which filling up the incisions, renders the letters more conspicuous. In some parts of India they likewise write on leaves with ink. Engraving on them, seems better adapted to the Indian characters, than it would



And paint on deathless leaves high virtue's meed :
Fair Science, heav'n-born child,
And playful Fancy on thy bosom smil'd.

Who bid the fretted vene
Start from his deep repose,
And wakes to melody the quiv'ring frame?
What youth, with godlike mien,
O'er his bright shoul. . . rows
The verdant gourd that swells with struggling flame
Nared *, immortal name !
He, like his potent fire,
Creative spreads around
The mighty world of sound,
And calls from speaking wood ethereal fire ;
While to th' accordant strings
Of boundless heav'ns, and heav'nly deeds, he sings:
But look ! the jocund hours
A lovelier scene display,
Young Hindol sportive in his golden swing,
High canopied with flow'rs ;
While Ragnies ever gay
Toss the light cordage, and in cadence sing
The sweet return of spring.

would be to those in use with Europeans, as none of
the former with which I am acquainted, have almost
any fine strokes in them.

* Nared is the supposed son of Brimha.

In



In the argument to this poem, we are told, that every name, allusion, or epithet, is taken from approved treatises. It is addressed to Serafwaty, as goddess of harmony: the musical modes are supposed to be demi-gods or genii; and an original *Raga*, or god of the mode, is supposed to preside over each of the six seasons*; each *Raga* is attended by five *Ragnies*, or nymphs of harmony†; each has eight sons, or *genii*, of the same divine art; and to each *Raga* and his family is appropriated a distinct sea-

* It must be here observed, that there are six seasons in India :

Sēṣṣār, the dewy season.

Hēemāt, the cold season.

Vāsānt, mild season or spring.

Greeṣhmā, hot season.

Vārsā, the rainy season.

Sārāt, breaking, or the breaking up, or end of the rains.

See WILKINS.

† Sir William Jones, in the first volume of the Asiatic Researches, likewise explains the *Ragnies* and *Ragas* to be *passions*.



son, in which alone his melody can be sung, or played, at prescribed hours of the day and night. The mode of *Dipaca*, or *Cupid the inflamer*, is supposed to be lost; and a tradition is current in Hindostan, that a musician who attempted to restore it, was consumed by fire from heaven.

Ah! where has Dipac veil'd
His flame-encircled head?
Where flow his lays, too sweet for mortal ears?
O lofs how long bewail'd!
Is yellow Câmôd fled?
But, earth-born artist, hold!
If e'er thy foaring lyre
To Dipac's notes aspire,
Thy strings, thy bow'r, thy breast, with rapture bold,
Red light'ning shall consume;
Nor can thy sweetest song avert the doom.

The last couplet of the poem alludes to the celebrated place of pilgrimage, at the confluence of the *Ganga* and *Yamna*, which the *Serafwaty*, another sacred river, is supposed to join under ground.

These



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These are thy wondrous arts,
Queen of the flowing speech,
Thence Serafwaty nam'd, and Vany bright!
Oh! joy of mortal hearts,
Thy mystic wisdom teach,
Expand thy leaves, and, with ethereal light,
Spangle the veil of night.
If Lepit please thee more,
Or Brahmy, awful name!
Dread Brahmy's aid we claim,
And thirst, Vacdevy, for thy balmy love,
Drawn from that rubied cave,
Where meek-ey'd pilgrims hail the triple wave.

“The *unarmed Minerva* of the Romans
“apparently corresponds, as patroness of
“science and genius, with Serafwaty, the
“wife of *Brimba**, and the emblem of his
“principal creative power: both goddesses
“have given their names to celebrated
“grammatical works; but the *Serefwata*
“of *Sarupacharya*, is far more concise, as

* Sir William Jones writes *Brahma*, but I have presumed to write it *Brimba*, from the opinion that *Brahma* is the Supreme and *Universal Being*, and *Brimba* but an emblem of one of his attributes.



“ well as more useful and agreeable, than
“ the Minerva of *Sanctius*. The Minerva
“ of Italy invented the flute, and Seraf-
“ waty presides over melody : the protect-
“ refs of Athens was even, on the same ac-
“ count, surnamed *Musicè*.”

“ Many learned mythologists, with Gi-
“ raldus at their head, consider the *peaceful*
“ Minerva as the Isis of Egypt, from whose
“ temple at Sais a wonderful inscription
“ is quoted by Plutarch, which has a re-
“ semblance to the four Sanskrit verses above
“ exhibited, as the text of the Bhagvat.—
“ *I am all that hath been, and is, and shall*
“ *be ; and my veil hath no mortal ever re-*
“ *moved.* For my part, I have no doubt
“ that the Iswara and Isi of the Hindoos,
“ are the Osiris and Isis of the Egyptians,
“ though a distinct essay, in the manner of
“ Plutarch, would be requisite, in order to
“ demonstrate their identity, &c.*”

* See Asiatic Researches, vol. i. p. 252, 253.



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In the temples of Vishnou*, this god is worshipped under the form of a human figure, having a circle of heads, and four hands, as emblems of an all-seeing and all-provident being. The figure of the *garoora*, a bird†, on which he is supposed to ride, is frequently to be found immediately in front of his image. Sometimes he is to be seen fitting on a serpent with several heads. They relate many different incarnations of Vishnou. One of his names, in his preserving quality, is Hāry.

“Nearly opposite to Sultan-gunge, a considerable town in the province of Bahar, there stands a rock of granite, forming a small island in the midst of the Ganges, known by Europeans by the name of *the rock of Jēbangueery*, which is highly

* See SKETCH V.

† This sacred bird is a large brown kite, with a white head. The Brahmans, at some of the temples of Vishnou, accustomed birds of that species that may be in the neighbourhood, to come at stated times to be fed, and call them by striking a brass plate.



“worthy the traveller’s notice, for a vast
“number of images carved in relief up-
“on every part of its surface. Amongst
“these there is Hāry, of a gigantic size,
“recumbent upon a coiled serpent, whose
“heads, which are numerous, the artist
“has contrived to spread into a kind of
“canopy over the sleeping god, and from
“each of its mouths issues a forked tongue,
“seeming to threaten death to any whom
“rashness might prompt to disturb him.
“The whole figure lies almost detached
“from the block on which it is hewn; is
“finely imagined, and executed with great
“skill. The Hindoos are taught to believe,
“that at the end of every *kalpa*, or crea-
“tion, all things are absorbed in the deity,
“and that in the interval to another crea-
“tion, he reposes himself on the serpent
“*Sesha*, duration, and who is also called
“*Ananta*, or endless*.”

* Note of Mr. Wilkins to his translation of the
Heetopades.



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Lechemy is the consort of Vishnou, and is the goddess of abundance and prosperity. She is likewise named Pedma, Camala, and Sri, *or in the first case Sris*. She may be called Ceres of the Hindoos, and, with a little help from imagination, an affinity may be found in the names. Sir William Jones, in order to strengthen this opinion, ingeniously observes, that “it may be contended, that although Lechemy may be figuratively called the Ceres of Hindostan, yet any two or more idolatrous nations who subsisted by agriculture, might naturally conceive a deity to preside over their labours, without having the least intercourse with each other; but no reason appears why two nations should concur in supposing that deity to be a female: one, at least, of them would be more likely to imagine, that the earth was a goddess, and that the God of abundance rendered her fertile. Besides, in very ancient temples

N 4

“near



“near to *Gaya*, we see images of Lechemy,
“with full breasts, and a *cord* twisted under
“her arm, like a *horn of plenty*, and which
“look very much like the old Grecian and
“Roman figures of *Ceres*.”

Shivah is represented under different human forms, and has a variety of names, but is generally called Shivah and Maha-Deva.

Facing the image is that of an ox in a suppliant posture; it being supposed, that this animal was selected by him as his favourite conveyance.

In his destroying quality, he appears as a fierce man, with a snake twined round his neck.

He is also called the god of good and evil fortune; and, as such, is represented with a crescent in front of his crown.—“May
“he,



"he, on whose diadem is a crescent, cause
"prosperity to the people of the earth *."

One of the names of his goddesses is Gow-
ry; who is also called Kaly, from *kala*,
time; which, by the Hindoo poets, is always
personified, and made the agent of de-
struction. But Sir William Jones says,
that her leading names and characters are,
Parvati, *Durga*, and *Bhavani*. "As the
"mountain-born goddess, or Parvati, she has
"many properties of the Olympian Juno;
"her majestic deportment, high spirit,
"and general attributes are the same; and
"we find her, both on Mount Cailasa and
"at the banquets of the deities, uniformly
"the companion of her husband."

"She is usually attended by her son,
"Carticeya, who rides on a peacock, and,
"in some drawings, his own robe seems
"to be spangled with eyes; to which

* Heetopades.

" must



“ must be added, that in some of her temples,
“ a peacock, without a rider, stands near
“ her image. Though Carticeya, with his
“ six faces and numerous eyes, bears some
“ resemblance to Argus, whom Juno em-
“ ployed as her principal wardour, yet as
“ he is a deity of the second class, and the
“ commander of celestial armies, he seems
“ clearly to be, the Orus of Egypt, and the
“ Mars of Italy.”

“ The attributes of Durga, or *difficult of*
“ *access*, are also conspicuous, in the festi-
“ val which is called by her name, and in
“ this character she resembles Minerva; not
“ the peaceful inventress of the fine and
“ useful arts, but Pallas, armed with a hel-
“ met and spear: both represent heroic
“ virtue, or valour united with wisdom;
“ both slew demons and giants with their
“ own hands; both protected the wise and
“ virtuous, who paid them due adoration.”

“ Indra is the God of *the visible heavens*.
“ His consort is named, Sacki; his celestial
“ city,



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“city, Amaravati; his palace, Vaijayanta;
“his garden, Nandana; his chief elephant,
“Airavat; his charioteer, Matali; and
“his weapon, Vaira, or the Thunderbolt.
“Though the East is peculiarly under his
“care, his *Olympus* is Merece, or the *north-*
“*pole*, allegorically represented as a moun-
“tain of gold and gems*.” He is said to
have a thousand eyes, and is sometimes
called *the roller of thunder*.

Varoona is the god of the seas and waters,
and is generally represented as riding on a
crocodile.

Vayoo is the god of the winds, and rides
on an antelope, with a fabre in his right
hand.

* For an inquiry into the affinity between the different Jupiters of the Greeks and Romans, and some of the gods of the Hindoos, we refer the reader to the first volume of *Asiatic Researches*, in the article, *on the Gods of Greece, Italy, and India*, already mentioned.



Agny is the god of fire, has four arms, and rides on a ram.

The earth is personified by the goddess Vafloodha, or Vafoo-deva, who, in a verse of the Heetopades, is called Soerabhy, or the cow of plenty.

Nature is represented as a beautiful young woman, named Prakrity.

The Sun is generally called Sour, or *Surya*, "whence the sect who pay him particular adoration, are called *Souras*. Their poets and painters describe his car as "drawn by seven green horses*;" though Mr. Foster informs us, that in the temple of *Bis Eishuar* at Benaras, there is an ancient piece of sculpture well executed in stone, representing this god sitting in a car drawn by a horse with *twelve heads*. His charioteer, and by whom he is preceded, is

* Sir William Jones—Asiatic Researches, vol. i.



Arun, or *the dawn*; and among his many titles, are twelve, "which denote his distinct powers in each of the twelve months: those powers are called Adityas *, or sons of Aditi by Casyapa, the Indian "Uranus."

"Surya is supposed to have descended frequently from his car in a human shape, and to have left a race on earth †, equally renowned in Indian stories with the Heliadae of Greece. It is very singular, that his two sons called Afwinau, or *Afwinicumaraw*, in the dual, should be considered as *twin brothers*, and painted like Castor and Pollux; but they have each the character of Esculapius among the gods, and are believed to have been born of a nymph, who, in the form of a *mare*, was impregnated with sun-beams. I suspect the whole fable of Casyapa, and

* Each of the Adityas has a particular name.

† SKETCH III.

"his



“ his progeny, to be astronomical ; and can-
“ not but imagine that the Greek name,
“ Cassiopeia, has a relation to it.—Another
“ great family are called, *the children of the*
“ *Moon.*”

“ The worship of the Solar or Vestal fire,
“ may be ascribed, like that of Osiris and
“ Isis, to the second source of mythology,
“ or an enthusiastick admiration of Nature’s
“ wonderful powers ; and it seems, as far as
“ I can yet understand the *Vedas*, to be the
“ principal worship recommended in them.
“ We have seen that Maha-Deva himself
“ is personated by fire ; but subordinate to
“ to him is the god Agny, often called
“ Pavaca, or the *purifier*, who answers to the
“ Vulcan of Egypt, where he was a deity of
“ high rank ; and his wife Suaha resembles
“ the younger Vesta, or Vestia, as the Eolians
“ pronounced the Greek word for a
“ hearth.—*Bhavani*, or *Venus*, is the consort
“ of the supreme *destructive* and *generative*
“ power ;



“power; but the Greeks and Romans,
“whose system is less regular than that of
“the Indians, married her to their divine
“artist, whom they named Hephaistos and
“Vulcan, and who seems to be the Indian
“Vishvacarma, *the forger of arms for the*
“*gods*, and inventor of the Agny-Astra *.”

The Sun is often styled king of the Stars
and Planets.

The name of his goddess is Sangia, who
is supposed to be the mother of the river
Jumna.

Chandara, or the moon, is also repre-
sented sitting in a car, but drawn by ante-
lopes, and holding a rabbit in the right
hand.

Ganes is the god of wisdom, or, as he is
sometimes called, of *prudence and policy*. He
is worshipped before any enterprise. He is

* See SKETCH XII.



represented in a human form, but with an elephant's head, as a symbol of sagacity; and is attended by a rat, which is considered by the Hindoos as an ingenious and provident animal. He has been called the Janus of India. "Few books are begun "without the words, *salutation to Ganes*; "and he is first invoked by the Brahmans, "who conduct the trial by ordeal, or perform the ceremony of the *Homa*, or sacrifice to fire *."

Vreehaspaty is the god of science and learning; and his attendants, the Veedyadharis, or literally, professors of science, are beautiful young nymphs.

Veek-rama is the god of victory. It is said to have been the custom to sacrifice a horse to him, by letting him loose in a forest, and not again employing him.

* See Asiatic Researches, vol. i.—And Voy. aux Indes Orientales, &c. fait par ordre du Roi depuis 1774, jusqu'en 1782, par M. Sonnerat, &c.



Fame has several names, and is represented as a serpent with a variety of tongues.

Darma Deva is the god of virtue, and is sometimes represented by the figure of a white bull.

Virfavana is the god of riches, and is generally represented riding on a white horse. He is likewise called Vitesa, Cuvéra, and Paulaitya. "He is supposed to reside in the palace of Alaca, or to be borne through the sky in a splendid car, named "Pushpaca *:" to preside over the northern regions, "and to be the chief of the *Yakshas* and *Rakshas*, two species of good and evil genii †."

Dhan-wantary is the god of medicine.
—"When life hath taken its departure,

* Sir W. Jones.

† Mr. Wilkins.



“ though Dan-wantary were thy phyfician,
“ what could he do *?”

Yam Rajah, or Darham Rajah, feems to hold the fame offices with the Hindoos, that Pluto and Minos held with the Greeks. He is judge of the dead, and ruler of the infernal regions. He has a fceptre in his hand, and rides on a buffalo. He was begot by Sour, or the Sun, on a daughter of Bifoo-karma, great architect of the heavenly manfions, and patron of artificers.

Darham Rajah's affittants are Chiter and Gōpt. The former has the care of reporting the good, the latter, the bad, actions of mankind. And that thefe may be exactly known, two genii attend as fpies on every one of the human race; the fpy of Chiter on the right, and that of Gopt on the left. As foon as any one dies, the

* Heetopades.

Jambouts,



Jambouts, or messengers of death, convey his soul to Darham's tribunal, where his actions are proclaimed, and sentence immediately passed upon him.

Darham Rajah has no power over the souls of these holy men, whose lives have been spent in piety and benevolence, unbiassed by the hope of reward, or the dread of punishment. These are conveyed by genii to the upper regions of happiness, and are afterwards admitted to *Moukt*, the supreme bliss, or absorption in the universal spirit, "though not such as to destroy consciousness in the divine essence."

In the Hindoo mythology there are several accounts of Krishen and the nine Gopia, very much resembling the Apollo and the muses of the Greeks. Krishen is supposed to be the god Vishnou in one of his incarnations, and to have come amongst mankind as the son of *Divaci by Vasudeva*.

O 2

He



He was fostered by the shepherd Ananda, and concealed from the tyrant Canfa, who sought to destroy him, on account of a prediction that he would die by the hand of a son of *Vasudeva*. He tended Ananda's flocks on the plains of Matra, a country famous for the beauty of its women, many of whom are supposed to have partaken his embraces. "When a boy, he slew the
"terrible serpent Caliya, with many giants
"and monsters: at a more advanced age,
"he killed his cruel enemy Canfa, and
"having taken under his protection king
"Judishter, and the other Pandoos, who
"had been oppressed by the *Kooroos* and
"their tyrannical chief, he kindled the war
"described in the great Epic Poem, intitled
"the Mahabarat, at the prosperous conclusion of which he returned to his
"heavenly seat in Vaicontha, having left
"the instruction comprised in the Geeta
"to his disconsolate friend Arjoon, whose
"grandson became sovereign of India."

Kriihen



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Krishen is likewise called Mohun, *the beloved*; Mænoher, or the heart-catcher, &c.: —He is represented as a beautiful young man, sometimes as playing on a mourly, or flute; and to this day he is the favourite divinity of all the Hindoo women.

The god of love has many epithets, descriptive of his powers, but the usual one is Kama-diva, or, literally, the god of desire.

In the argument of a hymn to this deity, published at Calcutta, Sir William Jones informs us, “that, according to the
“Hindoo mythology, he was the son of
“Maya, or the general attracting power;
“that he was married to Retty, or affection;
“and that his bosom friend is Vafant, or the spring: that he is represented as a beautiful youth, sometimes
“conversing with his mother, or consort,
O 3 “in



“in the midst of his gardens and temples; sometimes riding by moon-light on a parrot, and attended by dancing girls, or nymphs, the foremost of whom bears his colours, which are a fish on a red ground: that his favourite place of resort is a large tract of country round Agra, and principally the plain of Mathra, where Krishen also and the nine Gopia usually spend the night with music and dance: that his bow is of sugarcane, or flowers; the string, of bees; and that his five arrows are each pointed with an Indian blossom, of a heating quality.” Many of his names are mentioned in the hymn.

What potent god from Agra's orient bow'rs
Floats through the lucid air; whilst living flow'rs,
With funny twine, the vocal arbours wreath,
And gales enamour'd heav'nly fragrance breathe?
Hail, power unknown! for at thy beck
Vales and groves their bosoms deck,
And every laughing blossom dresses,
With gems of dew, his musky tresses.

I feel,



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I feel, I feel, thy genial flame divine,
And hallow thee, and kiss thy shrine.

Know'st thou not me!——

Yes, son of Maya, yes, I know
Thy bloomy shafts and cany bow,
Thy scaly standard, thy mysterious arms,
And all thy pains, and all thy charms.

Almighty Cama! or doth Smara bright,
Or proud Ananga, give thee more delight?
Whate'er thy feat, whate'er thy name,
Seas, earth, and air thy reign proclaim:
All to thee their tribute bring,
And hail thee universal king.

Thy comfort mild, Affection, ever true,
Graces thy side, her vest of glowing hue,
And in her train twelve blooming maids advance,
Touch golden strings, and knit the mirthful dance.

Thy dreadful implements they bear,
And wave them in the scented air,
Each with pearls her neck adorning,
Brighter than the tears of morning.
Thy crimson ensign, which before them flies,
Decks with new stars the sapphire skies.

God of the flow'ry shafts and flow'ry bow,
Delight of all above and all below!
Thy lov'd companion, constant from his birth
In heav'n clep'd Vassant, and gay Spring on earth,

O 4

Weaves



Weaves thy green robe, and flaunting bow'rs,
And from the clouds draws balmy show'rs,
He with fresh arrows fills thy quiver,
(Sweet the gift, and sweet the giver,)
And bids the various-warbling throng
Burst the pent blossoms with their song.

He bends the luscious cane, and twists the string,
With bees how sweet ! but ah, how keen their sting !
He with five flow'rets tips thy ruthless darts,
Which through five senses pierce enraptur'd hearts ;
Strong Campa, rich in od'rous gold,
Warm Amer, nurs'd in heav'nly mould,
Dry Nagkezer, in silver smiling,
Hot Kiticum, our sense beguiling,
And last to kindle fierce the scorching flame,
Lovehaft, which gods bright Bela name.
Can men resist thy pow'r, when Krishen yields,
Krishen, who still in Matra's holy fields
Tunes harps immortal, and to strains divine
Dances by moonlight with the Gopia nine ?

O thou for ages born, yet ever young,
For ages may thy Bramin's lay be sung ;
And when thy Lory spreads his em'rald wings,
To waft thee high above the tower of kings,
Whilst o'er thy throne the moon's pale light
Pours her soft radiance through the night,
And to each floating cloud discovers
The haunts of blest or joyless lovers,

Thy



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Thy milder influence to thy bard impart,
To warm, but not consume, his heart."

When Tanjore was taken by the English, a curious picture was found, representing Kamadiva riding on an elephant, whose body was composed of the figures of seven young women, entwined in so whimsical but ingenious a manner as to exhibit the shape of that enormous animal *.

The Eros of the Greeks is found riding on, and guiding, a lion. The Hindoos place Kama on an elephant, the strongest of the brute creation, and perhaps the most difficult to be tamed, but afterwards the

* Mr. Forster.

Several pieces of sculpture of the same figure, in bas-relief, have been met with in other parts of Hindostan.

Sir William Jones mentions a *picture*, of the same kind; in which the elephant is composed of nine damsels, and the rider is Krishen.

most



most docile. Here is a degree of analogy sufficient to excite curiosity, though perhaps not sufficient to prove that one nation derived the idea from the other. It may have been original with both. They were both polished nations; the power of love is every where felt; and it may naturally have occurred to people of lively and poetical imaginations, to paint the influence of that passion, by representing the infant god governing the fiercest and strongest animals.

Nared, the son of *Brimha*, is the *Hermes*, or *Mercury* of the *Hindoos*. "He was a
"wise legislator; great in arts and arms;
"an eloquent messenger of the gods, either
"to one another, or to favoured mortals;
"and a musician of exquisite skill."—"His
"actions are a subject of a *Poorana*."—"The
"law tract, supposed to have been revealed
"by *Nared*, is at this hour cited by the
"Pundits." He was the inventor of the
Vena,



Vena, or *Indian lute* ; for a particular description of which we refer the reader to the Asiatic Researches, vol. i. p. 295.

The idol of Lingam, a deity similar to the Phallus of the Egyptians, is always to be found in the interior and most sacred part of the temples of Shiva.—Sometimes it represents both the male and female parts of generation, and sometimes only the former. A lamp is kept constantly burning before it : but when the Brahmans perform their religious ceremonies, and make their offerings, which generally consist of flowers, *seven* lamps are lighted ; which De la Croze, speaking from the information of the protestant missionaries, says, exactly resemble the *candelabres* of the Jews, that are to be seen in the triumphal arch of Titus.

As the Hindoos depend on their children for performing those ceremonies to their manes, which they believe tend to mitigate
punish-



punishment in a future state, they consider the being deprived of them as a severe misfortune, and the sign of an offended God.

Married women wear a small gold Lingam, tied round the neck or arm *; worship is paid to Lingam, to obtain fecundity; and among the fables that are told to account for an adoration so extraordinary, is the following :

“ Certain devotees, in a remote time, had acquired great renown and respect; but the purity of the heart was wanting; nor did their motives and secret thoughts correspond with their professions and exterior conduct. They affected poverty,

* Sir William Jones observes, that, “ however extraordinary it may appear to Europeans, it never seems to have entered into the heads of the legislators or people, that any thing natural could be offensively obscene; a singularity which pervades all their writings and conversations, but is no proof of depravity in their morals.” Asiatic Researches, vol. i.

but



but were attached to the things of this life; and the princes and nobles were constantly sending them offerings. They seemed to sequester themselves from the world; they lived retired from the towns; but their dwellings were commodious, and their women numerous and handsome. But nothing can be hid from the gods, and Shivah resolved to expose them to shame. He desired Prakrity * to accompany him; and assumed the appearance of a Pandaram of a graceful form. Prakrity appeared as herself, a damsel of matchless beauty. She went where the devotees were assembled with their disciples, waiting the rising sun to perform their † ablutions and religious ceremonies. As she advanced, the refreshing breeze moving her flowing robe, showed the exquisite shape, which it seemed intended to con-

* Nature. See page 188.

† The Hindoos never bathe, nor perform their ablutions, whilst the sun is below the horizon.



ceal. With eyes cast down, though sometimes opening with a timid but a tender look, she approached them, and with a low enchanting voice desired to be admitted to the sacrifice. The devotees gazed on her with astonishment. The sun appeared, but the purifications were forgotten; the things for the Pooja * lay neglected; nor was any worship thought of but to her. Quitting the gravity of their manners, they gathered round her, as flies round the lamp at night, attracted by its splendor, but consumed by its flame. They asked from whence she came; whither she was going?—"Be not offended with us for our approaching thee; forgive us for our importunities. But thou art incapable of anger, thou who art made to convey bliss; to thee, who mayest kill by indifference, indignation and resentment are unknown. But whoever

* Pooja, is properly worship.

"thou



“ thou mayest be, whatever motive or ac-
“ cident may have brought thee amongst
“ us, admit us into the number of thy
“ slaves; let us at least have the comfort
“ to behold thee.”

“ Here the words faltered on the lip;
the soul seemed ready to take its flight;
the vow was forgotten, and the policy of
years was destroyed.

“ Whilst the devotees were lost in their
passions, and absent from their homes,
Shivah entered their village with a musical
instrument in his hand, playing and fing-
ing like one of those who solicit charity.
At the sound of his voice, the women
quitted their occupations; they ran to see
from whom it came. He was beautiful
as Krishen on the plains of Matra *. Some

* Krishen of Matra, or the Apollo of the Hin-
doos. See page 195.

dropped



dropped their jewels without turning to look for them; others let fall their garments without perceiving that they discovered those abodes of pleasure, which jealousy as well as decency has ordered to be concealed. All pressed forward with their offerings; all wished to speak; all wished to be taken notice of; and bringing flowers, and scattering them before him, said: "Askest thou alms! thou, who art
"made to govern hearts! Thou, whose
"countenance is fresh as the morning!
"whose voice is the voice of pleasure; and
"thy breath like that of Vassant * in the
"opening rose! Stay with us, and we will
"serve thee; nor will we trouble thy repose, but only be jealous how to please
"thee."

"The Pandaram continued to play, and sung the loves of Kama †, of Krishen, and

* Vassant, the spring.

† Kama, the god of love. See page 197.



the Gopia ; and smiling the gentle smiles of fond desire, he led them to a neighbouring grove, that was consecrated to pleasure and retirement. *Sour* began to gild the western mountains, nor were they offended at the retiring day.

“ But the desire of repose succeeds the waste of pleasure. Sleep closed the eyes and lulled the senses. In the morning the Pandaram was gone. When they awoke, they looked round with astonishment, and again cast their eyes upon the ground. Some directed their looks to those who had been formerly remarked for their scrupulous manners ; but their faces were covered with their veils. After sitting a while in silence, they arose, and went back to their houses with slow and troubled steps. The devotees returned about the same time from their wanderings after Prakrity. The days that followed were days of embarrassment and shame. If the women had failed in their

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modesty,



modesty, the devotees had broken their vows. They were vexed at their weakness; they were sorry for what they had done; yet the tender sigh sometimes broke forth, and the eye often turned to where the men first saw the maid; the women the Pandaram.

“ But the people began to perceive, that what the devotees now foretold, came not to pass. Their disciples, in consequence, neglected to attend them; and the offerings from the princes and nobles became less frequent than before. They then performed various penances; they sought for secret places among the woods, unfrequented by man; and having at last shut their eyes from the things of this world, and retired within themselves in deep meditation, they discovered that Shivah was the author of their misfortunes. Their understanding being imperfect; instead of bowing the head with humility, they were inflamed with anger; instead of contri-
tion



sanctified persons, the women approach them without scruple, nor is it thought that their modesty should be offended by it. Husbands, whose wives are barren, solicit them to come to their houses, or send their wives to worship Lingam at the temples; and it is supposed, that the ceremonies on this occasion, if performed with proper zeal, are generally productive of the desired effect.

The figure of Phallus was consecrated to Osiris, Dionysus, and Bacchus, who probably were the same. At the festivals of Osiris, it was carried by the women of Egypt, and the figure of Lingam is now borne by those of Hindostan.

The Hindoos, like the Greeks and Romans, have their demi-gods, who drink a beverage called Amrut; and their ærial spirits, that occupy the space in which the globe revolves. Every mountain, wood,



and river, has its genii and guardian deity. *Nullus enim locus sine genio est, qui per anguem plerumque ostenditur.* (SERV. in *ÆNEID.*) The Greeks ascribed the diseases to which frail mortality is exposed, to some angry god, or evil genius.—The Hindoos do the same.—Pythagoras pretended that the evil genii caused dreams and diseases, not only amongst men but animals. (DIOG. LAER. in *Pytha.*)

With a copious mythology, the doctrine of the metempsychosis, and fruitful imaginations, it is not extraordinary that the writings of the Hindoos should abound with fables, and tales of metamorphoses, which are read by them with great delight. The relations of the feats of their demi-gods and heroes very much resemble those of Bacchus, Hercules, and Theseus: and the wars of Ram with Ravana, tyrant of the island of Ceylon, form the subject of a beautiful epic poem, called the
Ramayan,



Ramayan, that was written by the famous Hindoo poet Valmie, some thousands of years ago.

They suppose, likewise, that a few souls are peculiarly gifted with the power of quitting their bodies, of mounting into the skies, visiting distant countries, and again returning and resuming them. They call the mystery, or prayer, by which this power is obtained, the *Mandiram*; and in the life of Viramarken it is told, that a certain powerful prince, longing to enjoy this supernatural privilege, went daily, attended only by a confidential page, to a temple situated in a retired and lonely place, where he preferred fervent prayers to the goddesses to whom the temple was dedicated, to instruct him in the *Mandiram*. Mortals know not what they ask, and the goodness of the gods is often shewn in not complying with their desires. The goddesses, however, at last yielded to his solicitations,



and the mystery was revealed. The slave had been ordered to remain at a distance, but his curiosity being excited by the extreme caution that was observed, he approached gently to the door of the sanctuary, and learned the secret, while the high priest was instructing his master how the *Mandiram* was to be performed. He retired softly to his station. The prince came out, with the appearance of uncommon joy. He frequently afterwards retired with the favourite page to the most unfrequented parts of a neighbouring forest, and after recommending to him to sit and watch over his body, he went and repeated the *Mandiram* in private, when his soul mounted into the skies. He was so delighted with this new amusement, that he forgot his duty as a ruler; he was tired of affairs of state; he lost the relish of his former pleasures; even his beautiful princess was neglected; and, like an early lover with his mistress, he
looked



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looked impatiently for the hour when he might quit the grandeur of his court, for the sake of soaring, for a moment, above the sphere of men.—Policy has recommended to princes to be cautious in bestowing their confidence, and not to put it in the power of any one to do them an injury that may not easily be repaired. One day that the monarch was delighted in his aërial journey, he forgot to come back at the appointed time. The page grew weary with attending, and wished to return to the court. He often looked at the body, and again into the air. He thought of a variety of things to divert the tedious hour. The secret he had learnt at the door of the sanctuary, came into his mind. He who fails in his duty once, generally yields to fresh temptations. Curiosity, that led him from his station before the temple, now prompted him to repeat the *Mandiram*. The conflict was but short. The mystery was performed. The
foul



foul instantly quitted the body of the slave. A more graceful form lay before it. The change was preferred. The slave now became the sovereign, and not chusing to have one who had been his master for an attendant, he cut off the head of his former body, as being now but a habitation for which he had no longer any use. The foul of the prince returned too late. He saw the lifeless corpse of his favourite. He guessed what had come to pass. And after floating, for some time, over the forest, and uttering those unhappy sounds, that are sometimes to be heard in the stillness of the night, he was commanded to enter into the body of a parrot. He flew instantly to his palace, where, instead of commanding, he was caught; and, for the beauty of his plumage, presented to the princess, as not unworthy of her regard. He was placed in her apartment; he saw his unfaithful servant wearing his crown, and enjoying his bed in his stead; he heard his late actions examined, his



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his faults criticised, his foibles turned into ridicule; and when, in the bitterness of impotent revenge, he repeated all the words of invective he had learnt, they only served to amuse the slaves. No one knew the secret until many ages afterwards, when it was related by a holy hermit *.

Perhaps in no literary research we are more liable to be deceived, than in endeavouring to prove the near affinity of one nation to another, by a similitude in particular customs and opinions. But notwithstanding my diffidence of argument merely grounded upon such a foundation, from what has been even already said,

* The same story, which is likewise mentioned by Father Bouchet, in his letter to M. Huet, Bishop of Avranches (to be found in *Lettres edif. & cur.* tome xii. p. 170. Edit. de Paris, 1781.) undoubtedly furnished the hint to M. de Moncrif, for his late beautiful tale of *Les Ames Rivaies*. See *Oeuvres de Moncrif*, tom. ii. p. 17. Edit. Paris, 1768.

there



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there appears so near a resemblance between the mythology of the Hindoos, and that of the Egyptians and Greeks, as inclines me to believe, that they originate from one common parent. Sir William Jones says, " I am persuaded that, by means of the *Puranas*, we shall in time discover all the learning of the Egyptians, without decyphering their hieroglyphics." And I cannot but congratulate the public, on an enterprize, from which we may now reasonably expect much curious, and perhaps useful, information.



S K E T C H V I I I .

Devotion and Worship of the Hindoos.

THE devotion of the Hindoos consists in going to the temples; in occasionally performing certain religious ceremonies at home; in prayers, in fastings, and other penances; in making offerings, both on their own account, and for the souls of their dead relations; in frequent ablutions, and in charities and pious works.

According to the rules of their religion, they ought to pray thrice a day—in the morning; at noon; and in the evening—*with their faces turned towards the East.* They should at the same time perform their ablutions, and when they have an opportunity, should prefer a running stream to standing



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standing water. But it is an indispensable duty to wash themselves before meals.

The offerings made at the temples generally consist of money, fruit, flowers, rice, spices, and incense. The offering on account of the dead is a cake, called Peenda; which ceremony is performed on the days of the new and full moon.

It has been asserted by some writers, that the devotion of the Hindoos was formerly sanguinary, and that even human sacrifices were offered, as the most acceptable to their gods. But the existence of such a practice appears to me extremely questionable. As far as I have investigated, the Hindoos seem to have been formerly what they are at present, mild and humane; and I know not any trace of a custom so barbarous, unless we consider in that light those voluntary sacrifices which some enthusiasts make of themselves.

It



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It is however true, that in their sacred writings mention is made of the Asmavedha Jug*, or sacrifice of the horse; of the sacrifice of the white elephant; of the Gomedha Jug, or sacrifice of the bull; and even of the Narmedha Jug, or human sacrifice. But it must be observed, that the things represented as fit to be sacrificed, have so many peculiarities, that we may conclude they were never to be found. If they have all the requisites that are described, it is said they will immediately regenerate from their ashes in the sight of the persons present at the sacrifice; and that their failing to do so, denotes the displeasure of the Supreme Being with those who may have caused the sacrifice to be performed. Under that denunciation, and with so many difficulties, we may suppose that such sacrifices have seldom or never been made; and we are at a loss to account for their

* Jug, is sacrifice.

being



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being mentioned in their religious writings, unless it be to indicate, that nothing in this life is too sacred or valuable, to exempt it from being devoted to the service of the Almighty.

Yet, notwithstanding what has been here observed, impartiality, and the attention that is due to whatever may be advanced by one so well informed in Asiatic history as Sir William Jones, require, that I should quote what he has said on this subject, and which had not been seen by me till after the first edition of this work was published.

“ The last of the Greek or Italian divini-
“ ties, for whom we find a parallel in the
“ Pantheon of India, is the Stygian or
“ Taurick Diana, otherwise named Hecate,
“ and often confounded with Proserpine ;
“ and there can be no doubt of her iden-
“ tity with Kali, or the wife of Shiva, in
“ his



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“ his character of the Stygian Jove. To
“ this black goddess, with a collar of golden
“ skulls, as we see her exhibited in all her
“ principal temples, *human sacrifices* were
“ anciently offered, as the Vedas enjoined ;
“ but in the *present age* *, they are abso-
“ lutely prohibited, as are also the sacri-
“ fices of bulls and horses : kids are
“ still offered to her ; and to palliate the
“ cruelty of the slaughter, which gave
“ such offence to Budha, the Brahmans
“ inculcate a belief, that the poor victims
“ rise in the *heaven of Indra* †, where they
“ become the musicians of his band. In-
“ stead of the obsolete, and now *illegal*
“ sacrifices, of a man, a bull, and a horse,
“ called Narmedha, Gomedha, and Af-
“ wamedha, the powers of nature are
“ thought to be propitiated by the less

* We presume that Sir William Jones means the Kaly Youg.

† See page 186.



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“ bloody ceremonies at the end of autumn,
“ when the festivals of Kali and Lechemi
“ are solemnized nearly at the same time.
“ Now if it be asked, how the goddesses of
“ *Death* came to be united with the mild
“ patronesses of *Abundance*, I must propose
“ another question, how came Proserpine
“ to be represented in the *European system*
“ as the daughter of Ceres? Perhaps both
“ questions may be answered by the pro-
“ position of natural philosophers, that
“ *the apparent destruction of a substance is*
“ *the production of it in a different form.*
“ The wild music of Kali’s priests at one
“ of her festivals brought instantly to my
“ recollection, the Scythian measures of
“ Diana’s adorers in the splendid opera of
“ *Iphigenia in Tauris*, which Gluck ex-
“ hibited at Paris, &c.”

The sacrifice of the kid to Kali, as above-mentioned, is probably the same with that which Father Bouchet calls the *Ekiam*.



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He says, " The Indians have a sacrifice
" called the *Ekiam*, where a sheep is killed;
" the Brahmans, who are forbid to taste
" meat at other times, are obliged, by the
" law, to partake of the animal that has
" been sacrificed;" and, in another place,
" they eat certain parts of the victim, but
" abstain from others; it is only on this
" occasion that they taste animal food *."

I am informed that a buffalo is likewise offered to Bawaney, at the feast of the Dohra; and these are the only instances of living sacrifices that I am acquainted with.

The worship of the Hindoos may be divided into two sorts, the *Narganey Pooja*, or worship of the invisible; and the *Sarganey Pooja*, or the worship before idols.

* Lettres edif. & cur. tom. xi. p. 25. Edit. ut sup.
Id. tom. xii. p. 249.



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But the followers of the latter are by far the most numerous: the former, comparatively speaking, are but few, and in the strict sense of the expression may be termed deists. They have either retained the true meaning of their religion from the beginning, or have in later times abolished the fables of the Brahmans, and restored it to its original purity. This seems to have been a principal object with Veias in his dialogues between Krishna and Arjoon; and it appears, that even in his time, above four thousand years ago, the adoration of the true god was confounded and lost in an artful and complicated mythology*.

At the hours of public worship the people resort to the temples. They begin their devotions by performing their ablutions at the tank, which is either to be found in

* See SKETCH VII. on Mythology.



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front of the building, or in the great temples, in the centre of the first court †. Leaving their slippers, or sandals, on the border of the tank, they are admitted to a peristyle or vestibule, opposite to the building which contains the idols, where they observe great reverence; and whilst the Brahmans perform the ceremonies of the Jug, or the Pooja, the dancing women occasionally dance in the court, singing the praises of the divinity to the sounds of various musical instruments.

The Pooja may likewise be performed at home before the household images. Those who are to assist at it begin by washing

† Some of the temples are of an oblong figure, and consist of two or more courts, immediately following each other. Some have only one inclosure, with the chapel where the images are placed, in the center of it; and some, though few, are like the one at Seringham, having different courts within each other.



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themselves. They likewise wash the room or place destined for the ceremony; and then spread it with a new mat, or with a carpet that is only used for that purpose. On this they place *the throne* of the image, which is generally made of wood richly carved and gilt, though sometimes of gold or silver. The things necessary for the Pooja are laid upon the mat; consisting of a bell of metal; a conch shell * to blow on; a censer filled with benzoin sugar, and other articles, which are kept constantly burning, by being occasionally renewed. Flowers separately and in garlands are scattered upon the mat. The idol is put into a metal basin, and being washed by pouring water first on the head, is wiped and placed on its throne. Cups, and plates of gold, silver, or other metals, are spread before it, some filled with rice, others with different

* The conch-shell is held in a sort of veneration by the Hindoos.



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forts of fruits, with dry sweet-meats, and with cow's milk. The worshippers repeat certain prayers and *Afblocks*, or verses in praise of the god whom the idol represents.

The Brahman, who performs the ceremony, occasionally rings the bell, and blows the shell. He gives the *Tiluk*, or mark on the forehead, to the idol, by dipping his right thumb in some substance that has been mixed with water, and prepared for that purpose. If the mark be a perpendicular one, he begins at the top of the nose, and advances upwards. But the colour, the size, and shape of the *Tiluk* depend on the tribe and sect the worshippers may be of; some tribes being marked with vermilion, others with turmeric, and some with the dust of the whitest species of sandal wood, &c. A Brahman generally marks all the persons present in the same manner. The fruit and

Q4

other

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other articles of food that were spread before the idol, are divided amongst them; and the idol is then carefully wrapped up, and with the throne and other things used in the ceremony, kept in a secure place until another Pooja be performed.

A veneration for the elements, but especially fire and water, seem to have been common to all the ancient Eastern nations. The Medes and Persians considered fire and water as the only true images of the divinity*; and it is evident, that the Hindoos, if they do not now worship fire, hold it in religious respect†. Every day at sun-rise the priests go to some river, or to the tanks of their temples, to perform the Sandivaney, or worship to Brahma the Supreme. After having washed themselves, taking water in the right hand, they throw

* Herod. i. Clem. Alex. Protrept.

† See page 188. under the article *Soun*.



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it in the air before and behind them, invoking the Deity, and singing forth thanksgiving and praise. They then throw some towards the Sun, expressing their gratitude for his having again appeared to dispel the darkness of the night.

Lucian says, that the Indians offered adoration to the Sun, in turning towards the east; and Philostrates observes, that they addressed prayers to him in the morning, to favour the cultivation of the earth; and in the evening, not to abandon them, but return again in the morning.

Father Bouchet says, that “ He who performs the *Ekiam* should, every morning and evening, put a piece of wood into the fire, that is employed for that sacrifice, and take care to prevent it from being extinguished.”

Mr. Wilkins informs us, that the Brahmans are enjoined to light up a fire at certain times,



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times, which must be produced by the friction of two pieces of wood of a particular kind; that with a fire thus procured, their sacrifices are burnt; the nuptial altar flames; and the funeral pile is kindled.

In the Heetopades it is said: " Fire is
" the superior of the Brahmans; the Brah-
" man is the superior of the tribes; the
" husband is the superior of women; but
" the stranger is the superior of all."



S K E T C H IX.

Devotees.

IN every part of Hindoostan we meet with numbers of devotees, distinguished by various names, but not restricted to any cast. They become such from choice, and every Hindoo, except the Chandalah, is at liberty to adopt this mode of life.

Of all the numerous classes of devotees, none are so much respected as the Saniaffies and Yogeys. They quit their relations, and every concern of this life, and wander about the country without any fixed abode.

It is said, in their sacred writings, "That
" a Saniaffy, or he who shall devote him-
" self to a solitary religious life, shall have
" no



“ no other clothing, but what may be ne-
“ cessary to cover his nakedness; nor any
“ other worldly goods but a staff in his
“ hand, and a pitcher to drink out of.
“ That he shall always meditate on the
“ truths contained in the sacred writings,
“ but never argue on them. That his food
“ shall be confined to rice, and other
“ vegetables; and that he shall eat but once
“ a-day, and then sparingly. That he shall
“ look forward with desire to the separa-
“ tion of the soul from the body; be in-
“ different about heat, or cold, or hunger,
“ or praise, or reproach, or any thing con-
“ cerning this life; and that unless he
“ strictly follow these rules, and subdue
“ his passions, he will only be more
“ criminal, by embracing a state, the du-
“ ties of which he could not perform, ne-
“ glecting those he was born to observe.”

With the precise distinction between the
Yogey and the Saniaffy, I am unacquainted.
The former in Sanscrit, signifies a devout
person;



person ; the latter, one who has entirely forsaken the things of this world. It is said in the dialogues between Krishna and Arjoon,

“ Learn, son of Pandoo, that what they
“ call *Sanias*, or a forsaking of the world,
“ is the same with *Yog*, or the practice of
“ devotion.

“ The man who is happy in his heart,
“ at rest in his mind, and enlightened
“ within, is a *Yogey*, or one devoted to
“ God, of a godly spirit, and obtaineth
“ the immaterial nature of *Brabm* the
“ Supreme.

“ The man who keepeth the outward
“ accidents from entering the mind, and
“ his eyes fixed in contemplation between
“ his brows ; who maketh the breath pass
“ equally through his nostrils, who hath set
“ his heart upon salvation, and who is
“ free from lust, fear, or anger, is for ever
“ blessed in this life.”

“ He



“He cannot be a *Yogey*, who, in his actions, hath not abandoned all views.”

“The *Yogey* constantly exerciseth the spirit in private. He is of a subdued mind, free from hope. He planteth his feat firmly on a spot that is neither too high nor too low, and fitteth on the sacred grafs that is called *Koos*, covered with a skin, or cloth.—There he, whose business is the restraining of his passions, should sit, in the exercise of devotion, for the purification of his soul, keeping his head, his neck, and his body steady, without motion, his eyes fixed on the point of his nose, looking at nothing else around. The *Yogey* of a subdued mind, thus employed, in the exercise of devotion, is as a lamp standing in a place without wind, which waveth not.”

“Supreme happiness attendeth him whose mind is thus at peace, whose carnal affections and passions are subdued, and who is in God, and free from sin.”

“The



“ The man whose mind is endued with
“ devotion, beholdeth the supreme foul
“ in all things, and all things in the su-
“ preme foul.”

“ The *Yogey* who believeth in unity, and
“ worshippeth me present in all things,
“ dwelleth in me.”

“ This divine discipline which is called
“ *Yog*, is hard to be attained by him who
“ hath not his foul in subjection, but it may
“ be acquired by him who taketh pains.”

“ The *Yogey* is more exalted than the
“ *Tapasivees*, those zealots who harass them-
“ selves in performing penances.”

“ He is both a *Yogey* and a *Saniasy* who
“ doeth that which he hath to do, inde-
“ pendent of the fruit thereof.”

“ Works are said to be the means by
“ which a man may require devotion, so
“ rest is called the means for him who hath
“ attained devotion.”

“ When



“ When the all-contemplative *Sainasy* is
“ not engaged with objects of the senses,
“ nor in works, then he is called one who
“ hath attained devotion.”

“ The soul of the conquered placid spirit,
“ is the same in heat and in cold, in pain
“ and in pleasure, in honour and disgrace.”

“ The man whose mind is replete with
“ divine wisdom and learning, who stand-
“ eth on the pinnacle, and hath subdued his
“ passions, is said to be devout*.”

It is not improbable that some of the passages in the sacred writings which were enigmatical, being understood literally by the ignorant, have given rise to those extravagant penances, with which some of the devotees torture themselves. In one of the above quotations they seem even to

* *Bhagvat Geeta*. The above quotations, as well as others, are not taken in the exact order in which they follow in the work, but are selected from different parts, as they suit the subject treated of.



be condemned; the *Yogey* being said to be more exalted than the *Tapasivee*, &c. I saw one of the latter, who having made a vow to keep his arms constantly extended over his head, with his hands clasped together, they were become withered and immoveable. Not long ago, one of them finished measuring the distance between Benares and Jaggernaut with his body, by alternately stretching himself upon the ground, and rising; which, if he performed it as faithfully as he pretended, must have taken years to accomplish. Some make vows to keep their arms crossed over their breast for the rest of their days; others to keep their hands for ever shut, and their nails are sometimes seen growing through the back of the hand; some by their own desire, are chained to a particular spot, and others never lie down, but sleep leaning against a tree *.

There

* *Philosophos eorum quos Gymnosophistas vocant, ab exortu ad occasum perstare contuentes solem immobilibus*



There are frequent instances of devotees and penitents throwing themselves under the wheels of the chariots * of Shivah or Vishnou, when the idol is drawn out to celebrate the feast of a temple, and being thereby crushed to death: and not long since we saw an account of the aged father of a numerous offspring, who devoted himself to the flames, to appease the wrath of a divinity, who, as he imagined, had for some time past afflicted his family and neighbours with a mortal epidemical disease.

The *Pandarams*, on the coast of Coromandel, are followers of Shivah; they rub their faces and bodies with the ashes of burnt cow-dung, and go about the towns and villages singing the praises of their God.

oculis, ferventibus arenis toto die alternis pedibus insistere.
Plin. lib. vii. cap. 2.—*Gymnosophists* was a name given by the Greeks, on account of their going naked, or probably from their not wearing an upper garment.

* These chariots are more properly great moveable towers, which require many oxen and some hundreds of men to draw them.



The *Cary-patry-pandarams* are a set of religious persons, who make a vow never to speak; they go to the doors of houses, and demand charity, by striking their hands together. They take nothing but rice, which is given them ready prepared for eating; and, if it be sufficient to satisfy their hunger, they pass the rest of the day sitting in the shade, and scarcely looking at any object that may come before them.

The *Tadinums* go about begging, and singing the history of the different incarnations of Vishnou. They beat a kind of tabor; and have small brass bells tied round their ankles, which make a considerable noise as they walk along.

These devotees are to be met with in every part of Hindostan; but chiefly in the neighbourhood of great temples, both from religious motives, and in order to receive alms from the pilgrims who resort thither.

Contrary to the practice of the Hindoos in general, many of them wear their hair,

R 2

and,



and, by frequently rubbing it with the oil of the cocoa-nut, it grows to an extraordinary degree of length and thickness. Some let it hang loose on their bodies, extending to the ground; others have it plaited in many tresses, and wound round the head in the form of a great turban.

Most of the ancient authors who have mentioned India and its inhabitants, seem to have confounded the Devotees, Sectaries, and *Pundits*, or Philosophers, with the Brachmanes, or regular priesthood. They speak of *Gymnosophists*, *Germanes*, *Pramnes*, *Samaniens*, and *Hilobiens*, who are said to be a class of the *Samaniens*, that lived in forests, and used no clothing or nourishment but what the trees afforded them.

Strabo says, that the *Samaniens* set no value on any knowledge but such as tended to correct vice, and that they smiled at those who applied themselves to metaphysics, astronomy, and astrology.—Probably

Strabo



Strabo meant such of the *Samaniens* as were *solitaries*, or hermits; for we find that the *Samaniens* in general were remarked for their learning, and their knowledge in the sciences.

Clement of Alexandria observes, that there were two classes of Indian philosophers, the one called *Brachmanes*, the other *Sarmanes*; by which, I am inclined to think they mean the *Samaniens*. He says some of the *Sarmanes* were called *solitaries*, and neither lived in towns nor had any particular dwelling; that they observed celibacy; and covered their nakedness with the bark of trees; nourished themselves with their fruit; and drank only water, and that out of the palms of their hands,

Porphyry acquaints us, that the substance of the doctrines of the Indians consisted in the necessity of adoring God with a pure and pious mind; that the *Samaniens*, who secluded themselves from the world, insisted



on the necessity of subduing the passions, in order to be fit to approach God; and gave that as the reason for the extraordinary penances they inflicted upon themselves, *thereby to render the body entirely submissive to the spirit*.

M. de la Croze says, that the *Samaniens* are still spoken of with respect, so far as regards their learning; but that their doctrines were held in abhorrence by the Brahmans, and that their sect no longer exists. He speaks of several of their literary performances. The title of one is *Tolkabians*, from its author, who is said to have been a Hindoo Rajah; we are told, it is very voluminous, and amongst other things contains the art and rules of Hindoo poetry. M. Ziegenbalg observes, that to understand it thoroughly, required long and arduous application.—Another work, called *Diva-garam*, which treats of language and *the choice of words*, is put into the hands of boys who
are



are destined to pursue learning, and is held in the highest esteem by their literati, but the style is so exalted as to be entirely above the comprehension of the vulgar.

Calanus *, who burnt himself in the presence of Alexander and his officers, has by some been called a Brahman;—but it is evident that he was one of those devotees

* We are told that he was so named by the Greeks, from his saying *Cale*, by way of salutation. They likewise called him Sphinés, which probably was no more his true name than the other. He was regarded by his countrymen as an apostate.—He followed Alexander; at Pasargadus, being attacked with a dysentery, he ordered a funeral pile to be prepared, and having performed his ablutions, sacrifices, and prayers, laid himself composedly down, and was burnt to death.

PLUT. *Vit. Alex.*

Strabo mentions a person who had accompanied ambassadors sent by a prince of India to Augustus, that burnt himself at Athens; and says, the Athenians erected a monument to his memory, with this inscription, “To Zarmonachigas, Indian of Bergafes, who voluntarily embraced death, according to the custom of his country.”

R 4

who



who travel about the country.—He is said to have gone naked; but the Brahmans neither go naked, nor commit any acts of extravagance. Their lives are uniform, indolent but decent; and chiefly occupied with their rites and ceremonies, they apply more or less to study, according to their genius and turn of mind.

But notwithstanding this inaccuracy of ancient authors, in confounding the Brahmans, or regular priesthood, with the devotees and sectaries; if we consider how limited their intercourse with India was, compared to that enjoyed by modern Europeans, and how little we ourselves knew of its inhabitants till within these few years past, we shall find cause, instead of being shocked with their errors, to be surprised at their instruction, and perhaps ashamed of our own supineness. Strabo observes, that those who had been in India, generally had seen things but partially, and by the way; that they had taken their information by
hear-say,



hearsay, which, however, had not prevented their giving accounts as if they had examined with accuracy *.

Some are of opinion, that the extravagant notions of the *illuminated* and *quietists*, that have figured among the Christians, and that still exist in different parts of Europe, came originally from the devotees of Hindostan. D'Herbelot says, "The sect of the *Illuminés* had its origin in the East; "it was brought by the Arabs into Spain, "under the name of *Alumbrados*, and has "been renewed in our days by Doctor "Molinos †."

But, besides the route given to this sect by D'Herbelot, we find that similar opinions with those of the *Illuminés*, were professed in the eleventh century, by Simeon, superior of a monastery of Saint Mamas in Constantinople, and were embraced by Pa-

* Strabo, 15.

† Bib. Orient. par D'Herbelot, p. 296. fol.

lamas,



lamas, bishop of Salonica. They appeared in the Latin church in the fourteenth century, and broke out and made great progress in the seventeenth, being professed and taught by Molinos, who is considered as the chief of the *Quietists* of the west.

Simeon and others pretended, that, by abstracting themselves from the things of this world, they might, while in a state of such abstraction, and absorbed in the contemplation of God, be received into grace, and partake of the divine essence.—That they then composed a sort of Trinity within themselves, of the body, the soul, and the holy spirit.—While in the practice of contemplation, it was recommended to the disciples, to sit with their chin upon their breast, the eyes fixed on the navel; and they pretended that when they were inspired with the Divine Spirit, they felt it pass through their nostrils, and were affected with peculiarly delightful sensations.—But beside the absurdity of those monstrous doctrines,



doctrines, which, it might be supposed, would have been sufficient to draw on them the contempt of all reasonable men, it was alleged, that the disciples of Molinos, trusting for their salvation to those exercises of *absorption*, were often engaged in scenes of the most licentious debauchery. They were called *Quietists*, from affecting an extraordinary tranquility of mind; and however strange it may appear, many of high rank of both sexes, and persons distinguished for their learning, were Quietists. The friend of the celebrated Madame de Maintenon openly professed herself to be of the number; nor is he even exempt from suspicion of having adopted many of the opinions of Molinos.



S K E T C H X.

Learning and Philosophy of the Brahmins.

ALL the ancient sacred and profane writings of the Hindoos are in the Sanskrit language, which is now only known to the *Pundits* *, or men of learning; and is neither spoken nor understood by the rest of the nation. Yet as Sanskrit words are still found in use over the whole peninsula; and as most of the proper names of persons and ancient places are derived from that language, it is not improbable,

* Pundit is a Sanskrit word, and an honorary title, signifying doctor or philosopher.

Mr. Wilkins informs us, that Sanskrit is composed from *San*, a preposition, signifying completion, and *skrita*, done or finished.

that



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that it was once universal, however remote that period may be.

If we compare the Brahmans of the present day with the *Brachmanes* * of antiquity, we shall, in almost every feature of their character, perceive the strongest resemblance. The difference that may exist between them, may partly have insensibly taken place in the lapse of time ; but must chiefly be ascribed to the revolutions that have happened in their government.

The ancient Brahmans, living in an age when the Hindoo empire flourished, cultivated science with an encouragement of which their oppressed posterity are deprived. Beside the study of the sacred, moral, and metaphysical writings of their nation, a principal part of their scientific pursuits seems to have been directed to

* The words are evidently the same, and derive their origin from Brahma, God.

astronomy,



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astronomy, natural philosophy, and some branches of mathematics.

Several ancient authors, in speaking of the philosophers of India, say, that they occupied themselves with things of a serious nature; in the contemplation of God and his works; that they spoke little, and seldom without necessity, yet never refused to answer those who came to them to be instructed*: that their discourse was concise, sententious, often allegorical, and that they sometimes used enigmas †.

Nearchus, who commanded Alexander's fleet, said, that they only respected truth and virtue ‡.

Strabo informs us, that they cultivated natural philosophy and astronomy.

They were held in so high repute for their maxims of morality, and for their

* Strabo, 15. Porphy. de Abst. 4.

† Diog. Laer. Proëm.

‡ Strabo, *ibid.*



knowledge in science and philosophy, that, besides Pythagoras, many went from Greece and other more eastern countries, purposely to be instructed by them. Such were, Democrites the Abderian, Pyrrhon, &c. * — Bardefanes of Babylon, who lived in the time of Alexander Severus, is said to have conversed with the Brachmanes, whom he represented as chiefly occupied in the adoration of God, and the duties of morality †.

Great affinity appears between the manners and practices of the Brahmans and those Gymnosophists of Ethiopia, who settled near the sources of the Nile; and, according to Philostrates, they were descended from the Brahmans. He says, the Gymnosophists of Ethiopia came from India, having been driven from thence for the murder of their king near the Ganges ‡. He makes

* Suidas.—Diog. Laert.

† S. Jerom. Porph.

‡ Philost. Vit. Apoll. c. 6.



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Pythagoras say to Thespesion, in reproaching him for his improper complaisance to the Egyptians, "Admirer as you are of the
" philosophy which the Indians invented,
" why do you not attribute it to its real pa-
" rents, rather than to those who are only so
" by adoption? Why ascribe to the Egyptians
" a thing as absurd, as to assert that the
" waters of the Nile, mixed with milk,
" (which they pretend happened formerly,)
" flowed back to their first source."—Iarchas, likewise, says to Apollonius, on asking his opinion concerning the soul:
" We think of it what Pythagoras taught
" you, and what we taught the Egyp-
" tians *."

* Philost. de Vit. Apoll. c. 6. He probably meant the people of the Thebaid, as the opinions of those of lower Egypt, with respect to the Supreme Being, appear in general to have been very different from the tenets of the Hindoos. Some said, that the soul after death descended to a subterraneous place, where it for ever remained; others, that it ascended to the stars, whence it originally came.



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Lucian observes, that the science of astronomy came from Ethiopia—perhaps, therefore, from these Gymnosophists who came originally from Indostan—And in making philosophy complain to Jupiter of some who had dishonoured her by their conduct, he supposes the Indians to have been the first instructed by her. She says, “I went
“amongst the Indians, and made them
“come down from their elephants and converse with me.—From them I went to
“the Ethiopians, and then came to the
“Egyptians.”—LUCIAN.

But though the Brahmans now may be inferior to their ancestors, as philosophers and men of science, their *cast* is still the only repository of the literature that yet remains: to them alone is entrusted the education of youth; they are the sole interpreters of the law, and the only expounders of their religion.

Bernier, in his letter, dated 4th October 1667, gives the following account of their literary pursuits at that time.

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“La



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“ La ville de Benares, est l'école generale,
“ et comme l'Athenes de toute la gentilité
“ des Indes, où les Brahmens et les Reli-
“ gieux, qui sont ceux qui s'appliquent à
“ l'étude, se rendent. Ils n'ont point de
“ Colleges ni de classes ordonnées, comme
“ chez nous ; cela me semble plus tenir de
“ cette façon d'école des anciens, les maitres
“ étant dispersés par la ville dans leur
“ maisons, et principalement dans les Jar-
“ dins des Fauxbourgs, ou les gros mar-
“ chands les souffrent. De ces maitres les
“ uns ont quatre disciples, les autres six ou
“ sept, et les plus renommés, douze ou
“ quinze tout au plus, qui passent les dix et
“ les douze années avec eux. Toute cette
“ étude est fort froide, parceque la plupart
“ des Indiens sont d'une humeur lente et
“ paresseuse ; la chaleur du pays et leur
“ manger y contribuant beaucoup.

“ Leur premiere étude est sur le Han-
“ scrit *, qui est une langue tout à fait
“ differente de l'Indienne ordinaire et qui

* Or Sanskrit.

“ n'est

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“ n'est sue que des Pundits. Elle s'appelle
 “ Hanscrit, qui veut dire langue pure, et
 “ parcequ'ils tiennent que ce fut dans cette
 “ langue que Dieu, par le moyen de Brah-
 “ ma *, leur publia les quatre † Beths qu'ils
 “ estiment livres sacrés ; ils l'appellent lan-
 “ gue fainte et divine : ils prétendent
 “ même qu'elle est aussi ancienne que Brah-
 “ ma, dont ils ne comptent l'âge que par
 “ Lecques, ou centaines de mille ans ; mais
 “ je voudrois caution de cette étrange an-
 “ tiquité. Quoiqu'il en soit, on ne sauroit
 “ nier, ce me semble, qu'elle ne soit très an-
 “ cienne, puisque leurs livres de religion,
 “ qui l'est sans doute beaucoup, ne sont
 “ écrits que dans cette langue, et que de
 “ plus, elle a ses autres de philosophie, la
 “ médecine en vers, quelques autres poésies
 “ et quantité d'autres livres, dont j'ai vu
 “ une grande sale toute pleine dans Benares.

“ Apres qu'ils ont appris le Hanscrit, ce
 “ qui leur est très difficile, parcequ'ils n'ont

* He means Brimha.

† Veds.



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“ point de grammaire qui vaille, ils se met-
“ tent pour l'ordinaire à lire le Purane, qui
“ est comme un interprete et abregé des
“ Beths, parceque ces Beths sont fort gros,
“ du moins si ce sont ceux qu'on me mon-
“ tra à Benares : ils sont même très rares ;
“ jusques-là que mon Agah ne les a jamais
“ pu trouver à acheter, quelque diligence
“ qu'il ait pu faire ; aussi les tiennent ils fort
“ secrets, de crainte que les Mahometans
“ ne mettent la main dessus, et ne les fassent
“ bruler, comme ils ont déjà fait plusieurs
“ fois.

“ Entre leurs philosophes il y en a prin-
“ cipalement six fort fameux, qui sont six
“ sectes différentes. Les uns s'attachent à
“ celle ci, et les autres à celle là, ce qui
“ fait de la difference, et cause même de la
“ jalousie entre les Pundets, ou docteurs ;
“ car ils savent qu'un tel est de cette secte,
“ et un tel d'une autre, et chacun d'eux
“ pretend que sa doctrine est bien meilleure
“ que celles des autres, et qu'elle est même
“ plus conforme aux Beths.

“ Tous



“ Tous ces livres parlent des premiers
“ principes des choses, mais fort diffé-
“ rent. Les uns tiennent que tout est
“ composé des petits corps, qui sont indivi-
“ sibles, non pas à cause de leur solidité,
“ dureté, et résistance, mais à raison de
“ leur petitesse, et disent ainsi plusieurs
“ choses ensuite *qui approchent des opinions*
“ *de Democrite et d'Epicure.*

“ Les autres disent, que tout est com-
“ posé de matière et de forme, mais pas un
“ d'eux ne s'explique nettement sur la ma-
“ tière, et bien moins encore sur la forme.”

“ D'autres veulent que tout soit composé
“ des quatre éléments et du néant.

“ Il y en a aussi qui veulent que la lu-
“ mière et les ténèbres soient les premiers
“ principes.

“ Il y en a encore qui admettent pour
“ principe la privation, ou plutôt les pri-
“ vations, qu'ils distinguent du néant.



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“ Il y en a enfin qui prétendent que
“ tout est composé d'accidens.

“ Touchant ces principes en general,
“ ils sont tous d'accord qu'ils sont éter-
“ nels.”

The Hindoos, like some of the ancients, suppose that the soul is an emanation of the spirit of God breathed into mortals. But their manner of expressing this idea is more sublime; for, instead of calling it a portion of the divine spirit, they compare it to the heat and light sent forth from the sun, which neither lessens nor divides his own essence: to the speech that communicates knowledge, without lessening that of him who instructs the ignorant: to a torch at which other torches are lighted, without its light being thereby diminished, &c.

Some of the philosophers not only believe that the souls of mankind are emanations
of



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of the *divine spirit*, but that the Sun, the Moon, with the other planets, and all the bodies that are scattered in the infinity of space, are pervaded, and made to exist by this spirit. These opinions are by no means peculiar to the Hindoos, but seem to have been entertained by the Chaldeans, the Persians, and many of the philosophers of Greece and Italy *.

Others giving still greater scope to the imagination, profess the doctrine of *Illusion*. They say nothing really exists in an individual sense, because the universe, and every thing contained in it, is only one, *it is God*, all things being emanations from the first principle. And it is necessary to attend to this doctrine, in order to comprehend many passages in their different authors which refer to it.

* Diog. Laert. in Pyth.—Plato in Tim.—Idem in Epin.—Cicero de Nat. Deor.



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Gowtama *, an ancient author of a metaphysical work, called *Nayaya-darsana*, makes a distinction between what he calls the divine soul, and the vital soul. The first, he says, is eternal, immaterial, and indivisible; resembling in that respect the great Spirit from whence it came: and he thinks it would be monstrous to imagine, that this essence or spirit should be affected by the passions to which mankind is subject. The second, he says, is a subtle element, which pervades all animated things; and he observes, that it would be as absurd to suppose that desire or passions of any kind could exist in organized matter only, as to suppose they could exist in a piece of mechanism that was the work of human ingenuity. Taking it then for

* This author is well known to the learned Brahmans. He is mentioned in the Heetopades as a prophet; and the late Colonel Dow tells us, that he deposited a copy of one of the volumes of his work in the British Museum,

granted,



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granted, that mankind partake in a certain degree of the spirit of God, which is not liable to human passions; and that organized matter, merely as such, cannot possess any; the vital soul, or pervading element, is that which gives birth to our desires.

In speaking of man, he mentions, besides the five external senses of seeing, hearing, tasting, smelling, and feeling, *one internal sense*; by which we presume he means intellectual perception.

He says, that the external senses convey into the mind distinct representations of things; and thereby furnish it with materials for its internal operations; but that unless the mind act in conjunction with the senses, their operation is lost.—Thus, for instance, a person in deep contemplation is frequently insensible to sound, nor does he perceive an object that is immediately before his eyes.—That ideas acquired by means of the external senses, produce



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produce new ideas by the internal operation of the mind, and have also the power of exciting sensations of pain or pleasure.

Reason, he says, is the faculty that enables us to conclude (from what falls under our immediate observation) upon things at the time not perceptible; as, when we see smoke, we know that it proceeds from fire.—Reason, he continues, depends on our ideas, and is in proportion to the nature and extent of them; and therefore, wherever our ideas are indistinct, our reason must be imperfect.

By perception, he says, we have an immediate knowledge of things in a certain degree, without the aid of reason; as of a horse, a tree, of hard or soft, sweet or bitter, hot or cold.

He then goes into a discussion of inference; takes notice of true and false inferences, and of things that can be demonstrated, and of those that cannot.

Memory,



Memory, which he seems to take in a very comprehensive sense, and almost to confound with imagination, may, he says, be employed on things present as to time, but absent as to place; on things past, and on things in *expectation*. He calls memory, the repository of knowledge, from which ideas already acquired, may be occasionally revived and called into action.

In speaking of letters, he says, by that heavenly invention a certain signification being given to figures and characters, the sight of them serves to revive ideas that have been neglected, or were not in action; as well as to convey others we are unacquainted with.—By these, he says, we may increase our knowledge by contemplative experience; by these the actions and discoveries, and learning of men in remote ages, have been transmitted to us: by these the virtues or vices of those of our own times will be transmitted to posterity;



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terity; and by these we may converse with those we love, however far they may be removed from us.—He then invokes Serafwaty, the goddess of science, by whom they are supposed to have been invented.

Treating of duration, he says, that as we cannot have an idea of its beginning or end, it cannot in its extent be brought within our comprehension:—that the duration, which is obvious to our conception, by means of motion and succession, is the space between one event and another; as the space from the first appearance of the sun in the morning till he disappears in the evening; and from his disappearing till he appears again; which definite space is called time:—that men having invented a mode of measuring time, or parts of duration, applied it to measure the revolutions of the planets, from whence proceeded the divisions of time, called years, months, and days, without which invention our knowledge would be confused, and history unintelligible.

He



He seems to hint at the folly of conjectures about the beginning or duration of the world. But as this, we presume, would not be orthodox with the Brahmans, his sentiments on that subject are so expressed, as to leave great latitude for explanation.

In speaking of the order of nature, as established by the Supreme Being, he observes, that it universally reigns in all his works;—that he therein shows us, that nothing can be produced without a first cause;—and he asks, what is chance, or accident, but a thing of momentary existence, yet always produced by a preceding cause?

In treating of providence and free-will, he supposes, that the Supreme Being, having established the order of nature, leaves her to proceed in her operations, and man to act under the impulse of his desires, restrained and conducted by his reason.—The brutes, he says, act by that impulse only, and employ their natural force or activity simply in the state they were given

to



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to them.—But that man, by means of his mental faculties, governs the fiercest animals, employs the strongest and swiftest for his use, discovers the nature and qualities of every thing the earth produces, and invents mechanic powers far exceeding natural force.—He then goes on to shew, that these qualities must proceed from some great and invisible principle, which God has not imparted to the brute creation, and whose existence must be separate from the vital soul, and independent of organized matter.—He observes, that this can no more be doubted, than it can be doubted that the elephant is stronger than the deer, or the deer swifter than the tortoise; but to ask why it should be so, or how it is, would perhaps be impious, and as absurd as to inquire why God created many of the animals which inhabit the earth, or of the fishes that live in the waters.—That we can never be sufficiently grateful for the portion of that spirit he has given us, comparatively limited as it may be ;



be ; that having left us unacquainted with the extent of it, we still go on in our researches, in the hope of acquiring farther knowledge, and of making fresh discoveries ; and that, by a proper use of it, we may raise our minds above the things of this world, and render ourselves superior to its events.—

Treating of a future state, he says, that such as during their abode on earth have persevered in the practice of piety and virtue, have worshipped God purely from gratitude, love, and admiration, and have done good, without being induced either by the fear of punishment, or the hope of reward, will not stand in need of being purified in *Naraka*, or of again coming into this world to occupy other forms, but will be immediately admitted to celestial happiness.—

This may sufficiently serve as a specimen of the reasoning of this ingenious Hindoo philosopher.



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But besides Gowtama, many others believe that mankind have two souls, the one *divine*, being an emanation from God; the other the *sensitive soul*, which envelopes the former *, and is placed between it and the matter of which the body is composed.

Some, like Pythagoras, suppose that the souls of animals are endowed with reason, and that if they do not always act like reasonable creatures, it is owing to the nature and organization of their bodies. Porphyry, who alleged that not only animals but plants had souls, said, that the soul did not think or operate in all things in the same manner, but according to the matter with which it was connected.—In plants it was the *germe*, in animals *intellect*.

In the dialogue already quoted from the Bhagvat-Geeta, between Krishna and Arjoun, Krishna says,

* Vid. *Hist. des Dieux Orient.*

“ Know



“ Know that every thing which is pro-
“ duced in nature, results from the union
“ of *Keshtra* and *Keshtragna*, matter and
“ spirit.

“ Learn that *Prakrity*, nature, and
“ *Pouroush*, are without beginning.

“ *Pouroush*, is that superior being who is
“ called *Maheswar*, the great god, the most
“ high spirit.

“ *Karma* is that emanation, from which
“ proceedeth the generation of natural
“ beings.

“ As the all-moving *Akash* *, from the
“ minuteness of its parts, passeth every
“ where unaffected, even so the omnipo-
“ tent spirit remaineth in the body unaf-
“ fected. And as the sun illumines the
“ world, even so doth the spirit enlighten
“ the body. They who with the eye of

* *Akash* comes nearest to the *ether* of Professor Euler, being more subtle than air.



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“ wisdom perceive the body and the spirit
“ to be distinct, and that there is a final
“ release from the animal nature, go to the
“ supreme.

“ These bodies, which envelope the souls
“ that inhabit them, are declared to be
“ finite beings. The soul is not a thing of
“ which a man may say, it hath been, or
“ is about to be, or is to be hereafter; for it
“ is a thing without birth, constant and
“ eternal, and is not to be destroyed. As
“ a man throweth away old garments and
“ putteth on new, even so the soul. The
“ weapon divideth it not, the fire burneth
“ it not, the wind drieth it not; for it is
“ indivisible, inconsumable, incorruptible,
“ and is not to be dried away. There-
“ fore believing it to be thus, thou shouldst
“ not grieve.

“ It is even a portion of myself, that in
“ this world is the universal spirit of all
“ things. It draweth together the five
“ senses,



“ senses, and the *mind*, which is the sixth,
“ and *Ešwar* *, presideth over them. The
“ foolish see it not, but those who indus-
“ triously apply their minds to meditation,
“ may perceive this.

“ There are three *Goun* arising from
“ *Prakṛity*; *Satwa*, truth; *Raja*, passion;
“ and *Tama*, darkness. The *Satwa Goun*
“ is clear, and entwineth the soul with
“ sweet and pleasant consequences. The
“ love of riches, intemperance, and inordi-
“ nate desires, are produced by the pre-
“ valency of the *Raja Goun*; and sottish-
“ ness, idleness, gloominess, and distrac-
“ tion of thought are the tokens of the
“ *Tama Goun*. If the mortal frame be
“ dissolved whilst the *Satwa* prevaieth, the
“ soul proceedeth to the regions of those
“ beings who are acquainted with the
“ Most High. But if it be dissolved, whilst

* One of the names of the Supreme Being.



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“ the *Raja* prevaiileth, the foul is born again
“ in one of those who are attached to the
“ fruits of their actions. And in like
“ manner, if it be diffolved while the *Tama*
“ is predominant, it is conveyed into some
“ irrational being.

“ He who conceiveth *Pouroush* and
“ *Prakrity*, together with the *Goun*, to be
“ even as I have described them, is not
“ again subject to mortal birth.

“ Those who constantly watch over
“ their inordinate desires, are no longer
“ confounded in their minds, and ascend
“ to that place which endureth for ever.
“ Neither the sun, nor the moon, nor the
“ fire, enlighteneth that place which is the
“ supreme mansion of my abode.

“ He, my servant, who serving me
“ alone with due attention, has overcome
“ the influence of the *Raja* and *Tama Goun*,
“ is



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“ is formed to be absorbed in Brahm the
“ Supreme.

“ There are who know not what it is to
“ proceed in virtue, or recede from vice ;
“ nor is veracity, or the practice of good, to
“ be found in them. They say, the world
“ is without beginning and without end,
“ and without an *Ešwar*, and that all
“ things are conceived by the junction of
“ the sexes. But these lost souls having
“ fixed on this vision, are hypocrites,
“ overwhelmed with madness and intoxi-
“ cation. Because of their folly, they adopt
“ false doctrines ; they abide by their in-
“ conceivable opinions, and determine in
“ their minds, that the gratification of the
“ sensual appetites is supreme happiness.
“ Confounded with various thoughts and
“ designs, and being firmly attached to
“ their lusts, they sink at last into the
“ *Narak* of impurity. Wherefore I cast
“ down those evil spirits, who thus despise

T 3

“ me ;



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“ me ; and being doomed to the wombs of
“ *Afoors* * from birth to birth, and not
“ finding me, they go into the infernal
“ regions.”

There is a passage in the above quotation from the Bhagvat Geeta, which seems evidently to allude to Atheists. “ There are
“ who know not what it is to proceed in
“ virtue, or recede from vice,” &c.—It is said that Atheists are still to be found in Hindostan ; and it appears, by a variety of testimonies, that a sect now exists, which professes doctrines nearly the same as those that were taught by Epicurus.

Father Martin, a jesuit missionary, says, in a letter from Marava, “ I forgot to re-
“ ply to your Reverence’s question, whe-
“ ther there are any Atheists among these

* Demons, or evil spirits.

“ people,



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“ people. I can only inform you, that
“ there is a sect called *Nektagher*, that seems
“ to acknowledge no divinity; but it has
“ but few partisans, and, generally speak-
“ ing, all the people of India adore a
“ deity*.”

De la Croze observes, “ Atheists are to
“ be met with in India, though the num-
“ ber is indeed very small; and those men
“ of letters who denied that there were
“ any, were misinformed.—M. Ziegenbalg
“ mentions a book named *Karaneivaroubba*
“ *Tarein Valamadel*, in which Atheism is
“ openly professed. According to the
“ sentiments of the Malabars, this work
“ is the production of a Pagan, and the
“ reading of it is strictly prohibited †.”

* Lettres edif. & cur. tome xi. p. 252. Edit. ut
suprà.

† Hist. du Christ. des Indes, tom. ii. p. 324. Edit.
ut suprà.



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De la Croze speaks of another book found among M. Ziegenbalg's Malabar manuscripts, called *Tebiva-paikkiam*, or the *Felicity of Life*, which he says is written in verse, and contains most excellent maxims of morality. The author, who is known by other poetical works, professed no particular worship, but maintained that the happiness of mankind depended on the practice of virtue. He left many proselytes, whose descendants, even at this day, have a total indifference about religion: they regard the Christian and the Hindoo exactly in the same manner; and M. Ziegenbalg observes, that he had many fruitless arguments with them, as they remained firm in their opinions.

It has been asserted by some writers, that the Hindoos believe in predestination; and there are several circumstances, as well as passages in some of their authors, which seem to give weight to that opinion. But, upon



upon farther enquiry, it appears, that it is contrary to the principles of their religion; and wherever this belief has obtained, it would be considered as the private notion of individuals, unwarranted by the established doctrines.

The philosopher and Brahman, *Vishnoo-Sarma*, says in the *Heetopades* : “ It has
“ been said, that the determined fate of all
“ things inevitably happeneth ; and that
“ whatever is decreed must come to pass.
“ But such are the idle sentiments of certain
“ men. Whilst a man confideth in Pro-
“ vidence, he should not slacken his own
“ endeavours ; for without labour he can-
“ not obtain oil from the seed.

“ They are weak men who declare fate
“ to be the sole cause.

“ It is said, that fate is nothing but the
“ consequence of deeds committed in a
“ former state of existence ; wherefore it
“ behoveth



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“ behoveth a man diligently to exert the
“ powers he is possessed of.

“ As the potter formeth the lump of clay
“ into whatever shape he liketh, even so
“ may a man regulate his own actions.

“ Good fortune is the offspring of our
“ endeavours, although there be nothing
“ sweeter than ease.

“ The boy who hath been exercised un-
“ der the care of his parents, may attain the
“ state of an accomplished man; but no
“ one is a Pundit in the state he came from
“ his mother's womb.”

Some of their philosophers insist, that
God created all things perfectly good; that
man, being a free agent, may be guilty of
moral evil; but that this in no way proceeds
from, or affects, the system of nature: that
he is to be restrained from doing injury to
others,



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others, by the rules established for the preservation of order in society; and that the pain and ills which invariably result from wicked actions, will alone be a never-failing punishment; as the happiness which a man receives from doing good, surpasses every other human blessing.



S K E T C H X I.

Astronomy of the Brahmans.*

THE Brahmans are in possession of ancient astronomical tables, from which they annually compose almanacks, and foretell eclipses, although they are now, I believe, unacquainted with the principles upon which their ancestors constructed them. Various predictions, founded upon their

* An inquiry into, and a regular account of, the astronomy of India, is a work to which I readily acknowledge myself unequal: I therefore beg leave to refer the reader to the works of M. le Gentil and M. Bailly, and the remarks of Mr. Playfair, contained in the second volume of the Transactions of the Royal Society of Edinburgh.

astrology,



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astrology, help to fill up these almanacks; some days are marked as lucky, and others as unlucky; and they likewise pretend to tell fortunes by means of horoscopes.

In their arithmetical calculations they are remarkably exact.—“ Their operations
“ are very numerous, ingenious, and difficult, but when once learnt, perfectly
“ sure. They apply to them from their
“ early infancy, and they are so much accustomed to calculate sums the most complicated, that they will do almost immediately what Europeans would be long
“ in performing. They divide the units
“ into a great number of fractions. It is
“ a study that seems peculiar to them, and
“ which requires much time to learn. The
“ most frequent division of the unit is into
“ a hundred parts, which is only to be
“ learnt consecutively, as the fractions are
“ different according to the things that
“ are numbered. There are fractions for
“ money,



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“ money, for weights, for measures, in
“ short for every thing that may be brought
“ to arithmetical operations *.”

The Hindoos reckon from the rising to
the next rising sun, sixty *nasigey*; each

* La Croze.—He observes, “ the same practice
“ undoubtedly existed among the Romans, which may
“ explain some passages of ancient authors, as in
“ Horace, *Art. Poet.* 325.

“ *Romani pueri longis rationibus affem*

“ *Discunt in partes centum deducere.*

“ It may likewise from hence be understood what is
“ meant by two passages in Petronius that have hi-
“ therto been obscure. In the first, a father says to
“ a teacher,

“ *Tibi discipulus crescit Cicero meus, jam quatuor partes*
“ *dicit.*

“ In the other, a man says, boastingly,

“ *Partis centum dico, ad as, ad pondus, ad nummum.*

“ I did not venture to give any examples of the
“ calculations of the Indians, though I have many in
“ my possession; but I do not in the least doubt that
“ the arithmetick of the Indians was that of the
“ Greeks and Romans.”

nasigey



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nafigey is divided into sixty *veinary*, and each *veinary* into sixty *taipary*: $2 \frac{1}{2}$ *nafigey* are equal to one of our hours; $2 \frac{1}{2}$ *veinary* to one of our minutes; and $2 \frac{1}{2}$ *taipary*, to one of our seconds: therefore a *nafigey*, or as it may be called the *Hindoo hour*, is equal to 24 of our minutes; and the *veinary*, or *Hindoo minute*, to 24 of our seconds. The astronomical year of the Brahmans, which is said to consist of

N. V. T.

365, 15, 31, 15, answers accordingly to

H. M. Sec.

365, 6, 12, 30.

By Europeans the solar year is now computed at three hundred and sixty-five days five hours forty-eight minutes and fifty-five seconds. It was reckoned by Hipparchus, about 1940 years ago, at three hundred and sixty-five days five hours fifty-five minutes and twelve seconds; and when the astronomical tables
of



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of the Brahmans were constructed, at three hundred and sixty-five days six hours twelve minutes and thirty seconds. Hence it would appear, that there is a gradual decrease in the length of the year; and if these calculations can be relied upon, we must conclude, that the earth approaches the sun; that its revolution is thereby shortened, and that the tables of the Brahmans, or the observations that fixed the length of their year, must have been made near 7300 years ago. The duration given to the year by Hipparchus, was confirmed by Ptolemy, who succeeded him; and the difference between our calculations and those of Hipparchus and Ptolemy, in some sort establishes the accuracy of those of the Brahmans*.

* The Brahmans refer to a period 2400 years before the Kaly-youg, or 7292 years ago. See *Traité de l'Astronomie Indienne et Orientale*, par M. Bailly. Transf. of the R. S. at Edinburgh, vol. ii. &c. &c.

Monfieur



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Monfieur le Gentil and Monfieur Bailly* have endeavoured to adjust the astronomical time of the Brahmans to that of the Europeans. Monfieur le Gentil fays :

“ C’eft ce que nous pouvons appeller
“ l’année fyderale des Brames ; mais parce
“ que les etoiles avancent felon eux, de
“ 54 fecondes tous les ans d’occident en
“ orient, on trouve (en fupposant encore
“ avec eux le mouvement journalier du
“ foleil d’un degre) qu’il faut oter 21', 36"
“ pour avoir ce que nous appellons l’année
“ tropique, ou equinoxiale de 365^d, 5'
“ 50", 54'''.

“ Cette determination eft de deux † minutes feulement plus grande que celle que
“ les aftronomes admettent aujourd’hui pour

* Traité de l’Astronomie Indienne et Orientale, par Monfieur Bailly, published in 1787.

† 1. 59.

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“ la



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“ la longueur de l’année ; mais elle est plus
“ petite de $4' \frac{2}{3}^*$ ou environ, que celle de
“ Hipparque adoptée par Ptolémée, qui
“ supposoit l’année beaucoup trop longue.
“ Par conséquent, les anciens Brames con-
“ noissoient la longueur de l’année solaire
“ beaucoup mieux que ne l’ont connue
“ Hipparque et Ptolémée.”

But, according to Monsieur le Gentil’s explanation, there would still remain a difference between the time given to the year by the Brahmans, and the modern astronomers, of 1 minute and 59 seconds ; and such being the case, I cannot see any good reason for admitting this explanation and condemning Hipparchus ; the more especially as his correctness with respect to the lunar period, is generally allowed.

The Hindoos allot four Yamams, or watches, to the day, and four to the night.

* $4' 10$.

Their



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Their week consists of seven days, to each of which they have given the name of one of the planets, and arranged them exactly in the same order that has been adopted by Europeans:

Sunday	is	Additavaram	{ or the day of the }	Sun
Monday	—	Somavaram	—	Moon
Tuesday	—	Mangalavaram	—	Mars
Wednesday	—	Boutavaram	—	Mercury
Thursday	—	Brahmapativaram	—	Jupiter
Friday	—	Soucravaram	—	Venus
Saturday	—	Sanyvaram	—	Saturn.

But their planets, like their gods, are frequently called by different names; or are variously pronounced in the different dialects, and parts of the empire.

Their year begins on the 11th day of our month of April. They divide it into two equal parts; the one comprising the time the sun is to the south, the other to the north of the equator; and they cele-



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brate his return to the north by an annual equinoctial feast.

To adjust the astronomical with the civil time, every fourth year is a leap year; in which the time exceeding the 365 days is thrown into one of the 12 months. The number of days in the months is unequal; and some are of opinion, that in establishing the duration of each month, attention has been paid to the time required by the sun to pass through the different signs of the Zodiac *.

In

* Ces mois n'ont pas tous de la même durée, le mois de Juin est le plus long de tous, et le mois de Decembre le plus court. Cette difference suppose que les astronomes qui les premiers ont travaillé à cette methode Indienne ont connu l'apogée et le perigée du soleil; c'est à dire qu'ils ont remarqué que le soleil retardoit son mouvement dans le mois de Juin, et qu'il l'accelerait pendant le mois de Decembre; qu'il employoit



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In their tables they are put down in the following order :

	Days.	Nas.	Vei.	Tai.
Sitterey, beginning the 11th of April,	30	55	32	0
Vayafey - beginning in May	31	24	12	0
Any - - in June	31	36	38	0
Ady - - in July	31	28	12	0
Avany - - in August	31	2	10	0
Pivataffy - in Sept.	30	27	22	0
Arbaffy - - in Oct.	29	54	7	0
Cartigey - - in Nov.	29	30	24	0
Margaii - - in Dec.	29	20	53	0
Tay - - in Jan.	29	27	16	0
Mafey - - in Feb.	29	48	24	0
Pangouney - in March	30	20	21	15
	<u>365</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>31</u>	<u>15</u>

In the common time they are reckoned as follows:

employoit par consequent plus de temps à parcourir le signe des Gemeaux que celui du Sagittaire. La longueur des autres mois est comme le temps que le soleil met à parcourir les autres signes du zodiaque.

Voy. dans les Mers de l'Inde.

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Bayfatch,



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Bayfatch, beginning the 11th of April, has 31 Days

Taith,	"	"	"	31
Afadeh,	"	"	"	32
Sanvon,	"	"	"	31
Bhadon,	"	"	"	31
Afan,	"	"	"	31
Catuk,	"	"	"	30
Aghou,	"	"	"	30
Pous,	"	"	"	29
Magh,	"	"	"	29
Phagon,	"	"	"	30
Tehait,	"	"	"	30

Days 365 *

The lunar month is divided into two parts ; that from the new to the full moon, is called *Sood*, or increasing ; and that from the full to the change, *Bole*, or waning. The former is likewise sometimes called *Sookla-paksha*, or the *light side* ; and the other, *Kreeskna-paksha*, or the *dark side*.

* In the manner of writing the names of the months for the astronomical time, I have followed Monsieur le Gentil, and for the common time Colonel Polier. But it must always be remembered, that names are differently pronounced in different parts of India.



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They reckon the duration of the world by four Yougs, but in the length ascribed to them, they are extravagant; and notwithstanding the endeavours of some ingenious men of science, to adjust their chronology to that of other nations, I do not find, that it has yet been done in a manner by any means satisfactory.

	YEARS.
The first, or the Suttu Youg, is said to have lasted	3,200,000
The Tirtah Youg, or second age	2,400,000
The Dwapaar Youg, or third age	1,600,000
And they pretend the Kaly Youg, or present age, will last	400,000

These ages correspond, in their nature, to the golden, silver, brazen, and iron ages of the Greeks.

They represent the four ages under the emblem of a cow.—She denotes virtue, and originally stood on piety, truth, charity, and humility: but three legs are gone, and she is said to stand now only on one leg.



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They tell us, that in the first ages men were greatly superior to the present race, both in the length of their lives, and in the powers of their bodies and mental faculties; but that, in consequence of vice, they gradually declined, and at last in this, the *earthen* age, degenerated to what we now see them.

At the end of each age, they suppose that this world is destroyed, and that a new creation succeeds.

They speak of an author, named *Mun-nou*, or *Menu*, who, they say, flourished in the Suttu Youg, or first age; of another, Jage Bulk, who is supposed to have lived in the Tirtah, or second age; and their writings are said to be still extant, and to contain many of the Hindoo laws and customs. That these authors are of great antiquity, we may allow; but the wild date given to their works by the Brahmans, instead of increasing our respect for them, makes us smile at their credulity: Or, when we consider



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sider their usual ingenuity, it leads us to imagine, that, like the ancient priests of Egypt, they have industriously wrapped up the origin of their spiritual authority in mystery, and thrown it back to a remote period, with a view to shut out investigation, and render inquiry fruitless. We shall therefore abandon these fabulous accounts to such as may choose to amuse themselves with conjectures, and proceed to dates that seem to be supported by science and history.

The beginning of the Kaly Youg, or present age, is reckoned from two hours twenty-seven minutes and thirty seconds of the morning of the 16th of February, three thousand one hundred and two years before the Christian æra; but the time for which most of their astronomical tables are constructed, is two days three hours thirty-two minutes and thirty seconds after that, or the 18th February, about six in the morning *.

* See *Traité de l'Astronomie Indienne et Orientale*, par Monsieur Bailly, published in 1787.

They



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They say, that there was then a conjunction of the planets; and their tables shew that conjunction. Monsieur Bailly observes, that, by calculation, it appears, that Jupiter and Mercury were then in the same degree of the ecliptic; that Mars was distant about eight degrees, and Saturn seventeen; and it results from thence, that at the time of the date given by the Brahmans to the commencement of the Kaly Youg, they might have seen those four planets successively disengage themselves from the rays of the sun; first Saturn, then Mars, then Jupiter, and then Mercury. These four planets, therefore, shewed themselves in conjunction, and though Venus could not have appeared, yet as they only speak in general terms, it was natural enough to say, *there was then a conjunction of the planets*. The account given by the Brahmans is confirmed by the testimony of our European tables, which prove it to be the result of a true observation: but Monsieur



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fieur Bailly is of opinion, that their astronomical time is dated from an eclipse of the moon, which appears then to have happened, and that the conjunction of the planets is only mentioned by the way. The cause of the date given to their civil time he does not explain, but supposes it to be some memorable occurrence that we are unacquainted with. We are by some told, that the circumstance which marked that epoch, was the death of their hero Krishna, who, as we have already observed, was supposed to be the god Vishnou in one of his incarnations. Others say, it was the death of a famous and beloved sovereign, Rajah Yudisther. But whichever of the two it may be, the Hindoos, considering the event as a great calamity, distinguished it by beginning a new age, and expressed their feelings by its name, the Kaly Youg, *the age of unhappiness or misfortune.*

But besides the Kaly Youg, we are acquainted with two other epochs, from which the Hindoos, in some parts of India, reckon their



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their civil time. The one commences from the year of the inauguration of a prince named Bickermajit, which happened in the year of the Kaly Youg 3044; and the other from the death of a prince, third in succession from him, called Salbàhàm, who seems to be the Salivaganam of Monsieur le Gentil. The reign of Bickermajit was distinguished by the strict administration of justice, and the encouragement given by him to men of learning. The poet and philosopher Kàldofs was particularly protected by him. By that prince's desire he is said to have made a collection of the different parts of the Ramayan *, which was dispersed in detached pieces; and he was considered as the chief of fourteen learned Brahmans, whom Bickermajit invited to his court from different parts of the empire, and distinguished with the appellation of *the fourteen jewels of his crown*.

* A celebrated Epic Poem, containing the wars of Rama.

Monsieur



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Monfieur Bailly informs us *, that Monfieur de la Loubère, who was fent ambafador from Louis XIV. to Siam, brought home from thence in 1687, tables and rules for the calculation of eclipses: and that he likewise found in the place, where the charts belonging to the navy are kept, two manuscripts containing Hindoo astronomical tables, that were deposited there by the late Monfieur de Lifle.

It appears that one fet of the tables deposited by M. de Lifle, and here mentioned by M. Bailly, had been given to him by father Patouillet, correspondent of the missionaries in India; and that the other fet had been fent to Father Gaubil, by father Duchamp, who procured them from the Brahmans at Krishnâpouram †.

* See *Traité de l'Astronomie Indienne et Orientale*, édition de Paris 1787.

† A town in the Carnatic.—It is written by M. Bailly, and by Mr. Playfair, in following him, *Chrifnabouram*.

The



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The tables that were given by father Patouillet, are thought to have come from the neighbourhood of Narfapour *, as they contain a rule for determining the length of the day answering to lat. 16° , $16'$. N.

Besides these, M. le Gentil brought to Europe, in 1772, other tables and precepts of astronomy, that he got from the Brahmans at Tirvalore †.

Here then are four different sets of tables and precepts of astronomy ‡, procured by different persons, at different times, and from different places, some of which are extremely distant from the others; yet all, as M. Bailly observes, evidently came from the same original: all have the same motion of the Sun, the same duration of the

* A town belonging to the English in the *Northern Circars*.

† A town in the Carnatic in lat. 10° , $44'$.

‡ All these tables and precepts of astronomy are deposited with the Academy of Sciences at Paris.

year,



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year, and all are adapted to the same meridian, or to meridians at no great distance, passing near to Benares.—As for instance, the tables brought from Siam by M. de la Loubère, suppose a reduction of one hour and thirteen minutes of time, or eighteen degrees and fifteen minutes of longitude, west from the part of Siam to which those tables had been adjusted, and which evidently refers to the meridian of Benares.

The tables and precepts above mentioned, contain chiefly, tables and rules for calculating the places of the Sun and Moon, and of the planets; and rules for determining the phases of eclipses *.

Monfieur le Gentil mentions, that the method described in the tables which he

* See *Traité de l'Astronomie Indienne et Orientale*, par M. Bailly.—And *Voyage dans les Mers de l'Inde*, par M. le Gentil, &c. tome i.

brought



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brought home, is called *Fakiam*, or the new, to distinguish it from another established at Benares, called *Siddantam*, or the ancient.—The Pere du Champ also says, that the Hindoos have a method called *Souria Siddantam*, which has served as a rule for the construction of all the tables now existing, and is supposed to be the original and primitive astronomy of the Brahmans: And he observes, that when the Brahmans at Krishnapouram were at a loss in their astronomical calculations, or committed mistakes, they used to say, *this would not have happened if we now understood the Souria Siddantam.*

The epoch of the tables brought from Tirvalore “coincides with the famous
“æra of the Kaly-Young; that is, with the
“beginning of the year 3102 before Christ.
“When the Brahmans at Tirvalore would
“calculate the place of the Sun for a given
“time, they begin by reducing into days
“the



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“ the intervals between that time, and the
“ commencement of the Kaly-Youg, mul-
“ tipling the years by $365^d, 6^h, 12'$,
“ $30''$, and taking away $2^d, 3^h, 32', 30''$,
“ the astronomical epoch having begun that
“ much later than the civil, &c.* ”

“ The Indian hour has been here reduced
“ to the European.”

Monfieur Bailly, in treating of these
tables, makes the following observations:
“ Le mouvement Indien dans ce long inter-
“ valle, de 4383 ans, ne differt pas d'une
“ minute de celui de Caffini; il est egale-
“ ment conforme a celui des tables de
“ Mayer. Ainsi deux peuples, les Indiens
“ et les Européens, placés aux deux extré-
“ mités du monde, et par des institutions
“ peut-etre auffi éloignés dans le tems,

* See Tranfactions of the R. S. of Edin. vol. ii.



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“ ont obtenu précisément les mêmes ré-
“ sultats, quant au mouvement de la lune,
“ et une conformité qui ne feroit pas con-
“ cevable, si elle n'étoit pas fondée sur
“ l'observation, et sur une imitation réci-
“ proque de la nature. Remarquons, que
“ les quatres tables des Indiens sont toutes
“ les copies d'une même astronomie. On
“ ne peut nier que les tables de Siam, n'ex-
“ istassent en 1687, dans le tems que Mon-
“ sieur de la Loubère les rapporta de Siam.
“ A cette époque les tables de Cassini et de
“ Mayer n'existoient pas; les Indiens avoient
“ déjà le mouvement exact que renferment
“ ces tables, et nous ne l'avions pas encore.
“ Il faut donc convenir que l'exactitude de
“ ce mouvement Indien est le fruit de l'ob-
“ servation. Il est exact dans cette durée
“ de 4383 ans, parce qu'il a été pris sur le
“ ciel même; et si l'observation en a dé-
“ terminé la fin, elle en a marqué égale-
“ ment le commencement. C'est le plus
“ long intervalle qui ait été observé et dont
“ le



ASTRONOMY OF THE BRAHMANS. 307

“ le souvenir se soit conservé dans les fastes
“ de l’astronomie. Il a son origine dans
“ l’époque de 3102 ans avant J. C. et il est
“ une preuve démonstrative de la réalité de
“ cette époque *.”

He says, that the Hindoo tables give an annual inequality to the moon, such as was discovered by Tycho Brahé, and which was unknown to the Alexandrian school, and to the Arabs who succeeded it.

In the Siamese tables, “ the motions of
“ the moon are deduced by certain interca-
“ lations, from a period of nineteen years,
“ in which she makes nearly 235 revolu-
“ tions; and it is curious to find at Siam,

* See “ Le Discours préliminaire du Traité de
“ l’Astronomie Indienne et Orientale.” Monsieur
Bailly, in a note to pages 36 and 37, shews that they
could not have received any instruction from any astro-
nomer who preceded Cassini, as all, except him, differ
from them very considerably.



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“ the knowledge of that cycle, of which
“ the invention was thought to do so much
“ honour to the Athenian astronomer Meton,
“ and which makes so great a figure in our
“ modern kalendars *.”

“ Cette règle suppose donc une période
“ de 19 années, semblable à celle de Méton
“ et du nombre d'or; et Dom. Cassini
“ ajoute, que la période Indienne est plus
“ exacte que le cycle ancien du nombre
“ d'or †.”

The Hindoos seem to have known the use of the gnomon at a very remote period; and at Benares, and other places, many ancient dials, of a very curious construction and nice workmanship, are yet to be met with.

Their religion commands, that the four sides of their temples should front the car-

* Transf. of the R. S. of Edin. vol. ii. page 144.

† Astron. Indien. et Oriental. pages 4 and 5.



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dinal points, and they are all so constructed.
Monsieur le Gentil observes :

“ Le gnomon sert aux Brames a trouver
“ la ligne meridienne, a orienter leur pa-
“ godes, et a trouver combien la longueur
“ d'un jour quelconque de l'année pris hors
“ des equinoxes, excède la durée du jour
“ de l'equinoxe, ou est plus petit que ce
“ meme jour.

“ L'usage du gnomon chez eux remonte
“ a une tres grande antiquité, s'ils s'en
“ font toujours servis, pour orienter leurs
“ pagodes, comme il y a lieu à le pre-
“ fumer *.”

“ The rule by which the phænomena of
“ eclipses are deduced from the places of
“ the sun and moon, have the most imme-
“ diate reference to geometry; and of these

* Voyage dans les Mers de l'Inde, par M. le Gentil.



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“ rules, as found among the Brahmans at
“ Tirvalore, M. le Gentil has given a full
“ account. — We have also an account
“ by Father du Champ of the method of
“ calculation used at Krishnapouram.

“ It is a necessary preparation, in both
“ of these, to find the time of the sun's
“ continuance above the horizon at the
“ place and the day for which the calcu-
“ lation of an eclipse is made; and the
“ rule by which the Brahmans resolve this
“ problem is extremely simple and inge-
“ nious. At the place for which they cal-
“ culate, they observe the shadow of a
“ gnomon on the day of the equinox, at
“ noon, when the sun, as they express it,
“ is in the middle of the world. The
“ height of the gnomon is divided into
“ 720 equal parts, in which parts the
“ length of the shadow is also measured.
“ One-third of this measure is the number
“ of minutes by which the day, at the end
“ of



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“ of the first month after the equinox, ex-
“ ceeds twelve hours; four-fifths of this
“ excess, is the increase of the day dur-
“ ing the second month; and one-third
“ is the increase of the day during the
“ third month.

“ It is plain that this rule involves the
“ supposition, that when the sun's decli-
“ nation is given, the same ratio every-
“ where exists between the arch which
“ measures the increase of the day at any
“ place, and the tangent of the latitude;
“ for that tangent is the quotient which
“ arises from dividing the length of the
“ shadow by the height of the gnomon.
“ Now, this is not strictly true; for such a
“ ratio only subsists between the chord of
“ the arch, and the tangent above men-
“ tioned. The rule is therefore but an ap-
“ proximation of the truth, as it necessarily
“ supposes the arch in question to be so
“ small as to coincide nearly with its chord.

X +

“ This



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*"This supposition holds only for places in
"low latitudes; and the rule which is founded
"on it, though it may safely be applied in
"countries between the tropics, in those that
"are more remote from the equator, would
"lead into errors too considerable to escape
"observation.*

*"As some of the former rules have served
"to fix the time, so does this, in some mea-
"sure, to ascertain the place, of its invention.
"It is the simplification of a general rule,
"adapted to the circumstances of the torrid
"zone, and suggested to the astronomers of
"Hindustan by their peculiar situation*."*

The Zodiac, or Sodi-Mandalam, is divided into twelve parts or signs, each of which has its particular name.

*"The names and emblems by which
"those signs are expressed, are nearly the*

* See Transf. of the R. S. of Edin. vol. ii. p. 170.

"fame



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“fame as with us; and as there is nothing
“in the nature of things to have determined
“this coincidence, it must, like the arrange-
“ment of the days of the week, be the
“result of some ancient and unknown
“communication*.”

Each sign contains thirty degrees; but the Hindoos also divide the twelve signs into twenty-seven parts †, which they call *constellations*, or *places of the moon reckoned in the twelve signs*; every sign is equal to two constellations and a quarter, each constellation consists of thirteen degrees twenty minutes, and has its particular name ‡.

“This

* See Transf. of the R. S. of Edin. vol. ii. p. 141.

† Vid. Voyages dans les Mers de l'Inde, par M. le Gentil.—Astr. Ind. et Orientale, par M. Bailly;—& la Croze, vol. ii. liv. 6.

‡ “Ces 27 constellations sont en effet marquées dans
“le ciel par des étoiles. J'emportai avec moi le nom
“de chaque constellation en particulier, et le nombre
“des



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“ This division of the zodiac is extremely
“ natural in the infancy of astronomical
“ observation, because the moon completes
“ her circle among the fixed stars nearly in
“ twenty-seven days, and so makes an actual
“ division of that circle into twenty-seven
“ equal parts.

“ des etoiles qu’il renferme; mais je ne peux pas assurer
“ les avoir bien reconnues, parceque beaucoup de ces
“ constellations sortent du cours de notre zodiaque.

“ Dans les regles de l’astronomie Indienne des
“ Siamois, que Dominique Cassini nous a données, tome
“ viii. des Anciens Mémoires de l’Academie Royale
“ des Sciences, p. 234, 235, & 239, il est dit, que les
“ stations de la lune sont les vingtseptièmes parties du
“ zodiaque: les Siamois admettent donc vingt sept
“ constellations, comme les Indiens de la presqu’isle
“ en deça du Gange; mais il ne paroît pas que les
“ Siamois fassent aucune attention aux étoiles, qui re-
“ pondent à ces vingtseptièmes parties du zodiaque.
“ On ne trouve ces vingt-sept constellations du ze-
“ diaque chez aucune autre nation Orientale; elles
“ sont donc un ancien monument bien précieux pour
“ l’histoire de l’astronomie.” Voyage dans les Mers
de l’Inde, par Monsieur le Gentil, de l’Academie des
Sciences, p. 256, 257, &c.

“ These



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“These *constellations* are far from including all the stars in the Zodiac. M. le Gentil observes, that those stars seem to have been selected, which are best adapted for marking out, by lines drawn between them, the places of the moon in her progress through the heavens*.”

The precession of the equinoxes is reckoned in their tables at fifty-four seconds in the year: the motion of the stars from west to east is found to be at present only about fifty seconds in the year: but from this motion of fifty-four seconds, they have evidently formed many of their calculations. They have a cycle or period of sixty years, each of which has its particular name; another of 3,600 years, and one of 24,000. From the annual motion given by them to the stars, of 54 seconds

* See Transf. of the R. S. of Edin. vol. ii. p. 140.



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of longitude in the year, 54 minutes of longitude make sixty years, 54 degrees 3,600, and the entire revolution of 360 degrees makes their great period, or *annus magnus*, of 24,000 years, which is often mentioned by them.

Their rules of astronomy are written in enigmas and in verse; in verse, perhaps, to facilitate the retention of them in the memory; and in enigmas, to render them unintelligible to all but those who are regularly instructed, a privilege which is denied both to the Bhyfe and the Soodra.

Monfieur le Gentil observes, that the Brahmans in general make their calculations with a great degree of quickness. He gives an account of a visit he received soon after his arrival at Pondicherry from a Hindoo, named Nana Moodoo, who, though not a Brahman, had found means, through the secret protection of persons in power, to learn some of the principles of astro-



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astronomy. Monsieur le Gentil, to try the extent of his knowledge, gave him some examples of eclipses to calculate, and amongst others, one of a total eclipse of the moon, of the 23d December 1768. Seating himself on the floor, he began his work with a parcel of small shells, named Cowries, which he employed to reckon with; and looking occasionally at a book of palm leaves, that contained his rules, he gave the result of his calculation, with all the different phases of the eclipse, in less than three quarters of an hour, which, on confronting it with an Ephemeris, Monsieur le Gentil found sufficiently exact, to excite his astonishment at the time and manner in which the calculation had been performed. Yet the education of Nana Moodoo, by his own account, must have been very confined; and Monsieur le Gentil takes notice, that he seemed entirely unacquainted with the meaning



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meaning of many terms, being unable to explain them.

“ Pour la facilité de leurs operations
“ astronomiques, les Brames les ont mises
“ en vers ; chaque terme est un terme com-
“ posé, et a besoin d'explication pour etre
“ compris : par ce moyen les Brames ne sont
“ entendus de personne, ou au moins ne le
“ sont que de très peu de monde.

“ Le Brame, qui avoit enseigné cet In-
“ dien, s'etoit donc réservé le secret des
“ termes, de façon que celui-ci faisoit
“ machinalement ses calculs sans les enten-
“ dre ; il trouvoit des resultats, et ne savoit
“ point ce qu'ils signifioient.

“ Par exemple ; dans les éclipses de lune,
“ les Brames ont donné à l'argument de
“ latitude, le nom de *Patona Chandara*,
“ c'est à dire, la lune offensée par le
“ dragon :



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“ dragon : Or, le probleme consiste à
“ trouver ce Patona Chandara ; l’Indien en
“ question le trouvoit tres bien, mais il
“ n’entendoit point le mot Patona Chan-
“ dara, bien loin, qu’il fut, que ce fut la
“ distance de la lune à son nœud, et ainsi
“ du reste *.”

In

* The *Patona Chandara* accounts for the vulgar idea among the Hindoos, that the eclipses are occasioned by a contest between the sun, or the moon, and the great serpent.

Eclipses are always observed with superstitious ceremonies. The following account is given by Bernier of those he saw on occasion of an eclipse of the sun.

“ Celle que je vis à Delhi me sembla aussi tres
“ remarquable pour les ridicules erreurs et supersti-
“ tions des Indiens. Au temps qu’elle devoit arriver
“ je montai sur la terrasse de ma maison, qui étoit
“ située sur le bord de Gemna. De là je vis les deux
“ côtés de ce fleuve près d’une lieue de long, couverts
“ de gentils, ou idolâtres, qui étoient dans l’eau
“ jusqu’à la ceinture, regardant attentivement vers le
“ ciel, pour se plonger et se laver dans le moment
“ que



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In addition to what has been already
said, tending to shew the superior antiquity
of

“ que l'eclipse commenceroit. Les petits garçons et
“ les petites filles étoient tout nus, comme la main.
“ Les hommes l'étoient aussi, hormis qu'ils avoient
“ une espèce d'écharpe bridée à l'entour des cuisses
“ pour les couvrir; et les femmes mariées et les filles
“ qui ne passoient pas six ou sept ans étoient couvertes
“ d'une simple drap. Les personnes de condition,
“ comme les rajahs, ou princes souverains gentils,
“ qui sont ordinairement à la cour au service et à la
“ paye du roi, et les ferrafs, ou changeurs, banquiers,
“ jouaillers, et autres gros marchands, avoient la plu-
“ part passé de l'autre côté de l'eau avec toute leur fa-
“ mille, et y avoient dressé leurs tentes, et plante dans
“ la rivière des Kanates, qui sont une espèce de par-
“ avent pour faire leurs ceremonies, et se laver à leur
“ aise avec leurs femmes, sans être vus de personne.
“ Ces idolâtres ne se furent pas plutôt aperçus que
“ le soleil commençoit de s'eclipser, que j'entendis
“ un grand cri qui s'éleva, et que tout d'un coup ils
“ se plongèrent tous dans l'eau, je ne fais combien de
“ fois de suite, se tenant par après debout dans cette
“ eau, les yeux et les mains élevées vers le soleil,
“ marmotant tous et priant comme on diroit en grande
“ devotion,



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of the astronomy of the Brahmans, to any other that Europeans are acquainted with, I shall take the liberty to make a few more

“devotion, prenant de temps en temps de l’eau avec
“les mains, la jettant vers le soleil, s’inclinant la
“tête profondément, remuant et tournant les bras et
“les mains, tantôt d’une façon, et tantôt d’une autre,
“et continuant ainsi leurs plongemens, leurs prières,
“et leurs singeries jusqu’à la fin de l’eclipse, quand
“chacun se retira en jettant des pieces d’argent bien
“avant dans l’eau, et faisant l’aumone aux Brames,
“qui n’avoient pas manqué de se trouver à cette ce-
“remonie. Je remarquai qu’au sortir de cette ri-
“viere ils prirent tous de vêtemens nouveaux, qui les
“attendoient tout plier sur le sable, et que plusieurs
“des plus devots laisserent là leur anciens habits pour
“les Brames. C’est ainsi, que de ma terrasse je vis
“celebrer cette grande fête de l’eclipse, qui fût
“chommée de la même façon dans l’Indus, dans le
“Gange, et dans tous les autres fleuves et talabs, ou
“reservoirs des Indes; mais surtout dans celui de
“Tanaïser, ou il se trouva plus de cent et cinquante
“mille personnes assemblées de tous les côtes des
“Indes, parceque son eau est ce jour-la reputée plus
“sainte, et plus meritoire qu’aucune autre.”



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quotations from the learned and ingenious remarks of Mr. Playfair.

“ The moon’s mean place, for the beginning of the Kaly-Youg, (that is, for midnight between the 17th and 18th of February, 3102 A. C. at Benares,) calculated from Mayer’s tables, on the supposition that her motion has always been at the same rate as at the beginning of the present century, is $10^{\circ} 0' 51'' 16''$ —But, according to the same astronomer, the moon is subject to a small, but uniform acceleration, such that her angular motion, in any one age, is $9''$ greater than in the preceding, which, in an interval of 4,801 years, must have amounted to $5^{\circ}, 45', 44''$. This must be added, to give the real mean place of the moon at the astronomical epoch of the Kaly-Youg, which is therefore $10^{\circ}, 6', 37'$.—Now, the same, by the tables of Tirvallore, is $10^{\circ}, 6', 0'$; the difference is less than two-thirds of a degree, which, for so remote



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remote a period, and considering the acceleration of the moon's motion, for which no allowance could be made in an Indian calculation, is a degree of accuracy that nothing but actual observation could have produced.

“ To confirm this conclusion, M. Bailly computes the place of the moon for the same epoch, by all the tables to which the Indian astronomers can be supposed to have ever had access. He begins with the tables of Ptolemy; and if, by help of them, we go back from the æra of Nabonassar to the epoch of the Kaly-Young, taking into account the comparative length of the Egyptian and Indian years, together with the difference of meridians between Alexandria and Tirvalore, we shall find the longitude of the sun, $10^{\circ}, 21', 15''$ greater, and that of the moon $11^{\circ}, 52', 7''$ greater, than has just been found from the Indian tables. At the same time that this shews

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how

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how difficult it is to go back, even for a less period than that of 3000 years, in an astronomical computation, it affords a proof altogether demonstrative, *that the Indian astronomy is not derived from that of Ptolemy.*

“ The tables of Ulugh Beig are more accurate than those of the Egyptian astronomer. They were constructed in a country not far from India, and but a few years earlier than 1491, the epoch of the tables at Krishnapouram. Their date is July the 4th, at noon, 1437, at Samarcand; and yet they do not agree with the Indian tables, even at the above-mentioned epoch of 1491. But for the year 3102 before Christ, their difference from them in the place of the sun is $1^{\circ} 30'$, and in that of the moon 6° ; which, though much less than the former differences, are sufficient to show, *that the tables of India are not borrowed from those of Tartary.*

“ The



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“ The Arabians employed in their tables the mean motions of Ptolemy; the Persians did the same, both in the more ancient tables of Chryfococca, and the later ones of Naffireddin. *It is therefore certain, that the astronomy of the Brahmans is neither derived from that of the Greeks, the Arabians, the Persians, or the Tartars.* This appeared so clear to Caffini, though he had only examined the tables of Siam, and knew nothing of many of the great points which distinguish the Indian astronomy from that of all other nations, that he gives it as his opinion, that these tables are neither derived from the Persian astronomy of Chryfococca, nor from the Greek astronomy of Ptolemy; the places they give at their epoch to the apogee of the sun, and of the moon, and their equation for the sun's centre, being very different from both *.”

* See Transf. of the R. S. of Edin. vol. ii. p. 155, &c.



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“ * A formula for computing this inequality” (in the moon’s motion) “ has been given by M. de la Place, which though only an approximation, being derived from theory, is more accurate than that which Mayer deduced entirely from observation; and if it be taken instead of Mayer’s, which last, on account of its simplicity, I have employed in the preceding calculations, it will give a quantity somewhat different, though not such as to affect the general result. It makes the acceleration for 4383 years, dated from the beginning of the Kaly-Young, to be greater by $17', 39'$ than was found from Mayer’s rule, and greater, consequently, by $16', 32''$, than was deduced from the tables of Krishnapouram. It is plain, that this coincidence is still near enough to leave the argument that is founded on it in possession of all its force, and to afford a strong confirma-

* See Transl. of the R. S. of Edin. vol. ii. p. 160.

tion



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tion of the accuracy of the theory and the authenticity of the tables.

“ That observations made in India, when all Europe was barbarous or uninhabited, and investigations into the most subtle effects of gravitation, made in Europe near five thousand years afterwards, should thus come in mutual support of one another, is perhaps the most striking example of the progress and vicissitude of science, which the history of mankind has yet exhibited.

“ This, however, is not the only instance of the same kind that will occur, if, from examining the radical places and mean motions in the Indian astronomy, we proceed to consider some other of its elements; such as, the length of the year, the inequality of the sun's motion, and the obliquity of the ecliptic, and compare them with the conclusions deduced from the

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theory

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theory of gravity by M. de la Grange. To that geometer, physical astronomy is indebted for one of the most beautiful of its discoveries, viz.—That all the variations in our system are periodical; so that though every thing, almost without exception, be subject to change, it will, after a certain interval, return to the same state in which it is at present, and leave no room for the introduction of disorder, or of any irregularity that might constantly increase. Many of these periods, however, are of vast duration. A great number of ages, for instance, must elapse, before the year be again exactly of the same length, or the sun's equation of the same magnitude, as at present. An astronomy, therefore, which professes to be so ancient as the Indian, ought to differ considerably from ours in many of its elements. If, indeed, these differences are irregular, they are the effects of chance, and must be accounted errors; but if they observe the laws,



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laws, which theory informs us that the variations in our system do actually observe, they must be held as the most undoubted marks of authenticity *."

Mr. Playfair then goes on to examine this question, as M. Bailly has done; and we are persuaded, if the reader will *impartially* peruse the investigations of these learned men, he will be satisfied, that the differences alluded to, are neither the effects of chance, nor to be accounted errors.

After examining the duration given to the year by the Brahmans at the period of the Kaly-Youg, Mr. Playfair proceeds:

"The equation of the sun's centre is an element in the Indian astronomy, which has a more unequivocal appearance of *belonging to an earlier period than the Kaly-*

* See Transf. of the R. S. of Edin. vol. ii. p. 160, &c.
Youg.



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Young *. The maximum of *that equation* is fixed, in these tables, at $2^{\circ}, 10', 32''$. It is at present, according to M. de la Caille, $1^{\circ}, 55' \frac{1}{2}$, that is $15'$ less than with the Brahmans. Now, M. de la Grange has shewn, that the sun's equation, together with the eccentricity of the earth's orbit, on which it depends, is subject to alternate diminution and increase, and accordingly has been diminishing for many ages. In the year 3102 before our æra, that equation was $2^{\circ}, 6', 28'' \frac{1}{2}$; less only by $4'$, than in the tables of the Brahmans. But if we suppose the Indian astronomy to be founded on observations that preceded the Kaly-Young, the determination of this equation

* M. Bailly, in his remarks on the length of the years, supposes some of the observations of the Brahmans to have been made during a period often mentioned by them, of 2400 years before the Kaly-Young, or, 7,292 years ago.—He takes the medium of that period 1200 years before the Kaly-Young, or 6090 years ago,

will



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will be found to be still more exact.—Twelve hundred years before the commencement of that period, or about 4300 before our æra, it appears, by computing from M. de la Grange's formula, that the equation of the sun's centre was actually $2^{\circ}, 8', 16''$; so that if the Indian astronomy be as old as that period, its error with respect to this equation is but $2'*$.

“ The obliquity of the ecliptic is another element in which the Indian astronomy and the European do not agree, but where their difference is exactly such as the high antiquity of the former is found to require. The Brahmans make the obliquity of the ecliptic 24° .—Now M. de la Grange's formula for the variation of the obliquity, gives $22', 32''$, to be added to its obliquity in 1700, that is, to $23^{\circ}, 28', 41''$, in order to have that which took place in

* See Transf. of the R. S. of Edin. p. 163.



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the year 3,102 before our æra. This gives us $23^{\circ}, 51', 13''$, which is $8', 47''$ short of the determination of the Indian astronomers.—But if we suppose, as in the case of the sun's equation, that the observations on which this determination is founded, were made 1200 years before the Kaly-Young, we shall find that the obliquity of the ecliptic was $23^{\circ}, 57', 45''$, and that the error of the tables did not much exceed $2'$.

“ Thus do the measures which the Brahmans assign to these three quantities, the length of the tropical year, the equation of the sun's centre, and the obliquity of the ecliptic, all agree, in referring the epoch of their determination to the year 3102 before our æra, *or to a period still more ancient*. This coincidence in three elements, altogether independent of one another, cannot be the effect of chance. The difference, with respect to each of them, be-

8 tween



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tween their astronomy and ours, might singly perhaps be ascribed to inaccuracy; but that three errors, which chance had introduced, should be all of such magnitude as to suit exactly the same hypothesis concerning their origin, is hardly to be conceived.—Yet there is no other alternative, but to admit this very improbable supposition, or to acknowledge, that the Indian astronomy is as ancient as one or other of the periods abovementioned *.

“ In seeking for the cause of the secular equations, which modern astronomers have found it necessary to apply to the mean motion of Jupiter and Saturn, M. de la Place has discovered, that there are inequalities belonging to both these planets,

* See Transf. of the R. S. of Edin. p. 164.

In supposing the time necessary for the progress of knowledge in that science, we must look to periods much beyond those.

arising



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arising from their mutual action on one another, which have long periods, one of them no less than 877 years; so that the mean motion must appear different, if it be determined from observations made in different parts of those periods. "Now I find," says he, "by my theory, that at the Indian epoch of 3102 years before Christ, the apparent and annual mean motion of Saturn was $12^{\circ}, 13', 14''$, and the Indian tables make it $12^{\circ}, 13', 13''$."

"In like manner, I find, that the annual and apparent mean motion of Jupiter at that epoch, was $30^{\circ}, 20', 42''$, precisely as in the Indian astronomy."

"Thus have we enumerated no less than nine astronomical elements *, to which the tables

* "The inequality or the precession of the equinoxes; the acceleration of the moon; the length of the solar year;



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tables of India assign such values as do by no means belong to them in these later ages, but such as the theory of gravity proves to have belonged to them three thousand years before the Christian æra. At that time, therefore, or *in the ages preceding it*, the observations must have been made from which these elements were deduced. For it is abundantly evident, that the Brahmans of later times, however willing they might be to adapt their tables to so remarkable an epoch as the Kaly-Young, could never think of doing so, by substituting, instead of quantities which they had observed, others which they had no reason to believe had ever existed. The elements in question are precisely what these astronomers must have supposed in-

year; the equation of the sun's centre; the obliquity of the ecliptic; the place of Jupiter's aphelion; the equation of Saturn's centre; and the inequalities in the mean motion of both these planets."

variable,



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variable, and of which, had they supposed them to change, they had no rules to go by for ascertaining the variations; since to the discovery of these rules is required, not only all the perfection to which astronomy is at this day brought in Europe, but all that which the sciences of motion and of extension have likewise attained. It is no less clear that these coincidences are not the work of accident; for it will scarcely be supposed that chance has adjusted the errors of the Indian astronomy with such singular felicity, that observers, who could not discover the true state of the heavens, at the age in which they lived, have succeeded in describing one which took place several thousand years before they were born*.

“ The preceding calculations must have required the assistance of many subsidiary

* See Transl. of the R. S. of Edin. vol. ii. p. 169.
tables,



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tables, of which no trace has yet been found in India. Besides many other geometrical propositions, some of them also involve the ratio which the diameter of a circle was supposed to bear to its circumference, but which we would find it impossible to discover from them exactly, on account of the small quantities that may have been neglected in their calculations. Fortunately, we can arrive at this knowledge, which is very material when the progress of geometry is to be estimated, from a passage in the *Ayin Akbaree**, where we are told that the Hindoos suppose the diameter of a circle to be to its circumference as 1250 to 3927; and where the author, *who believed it to be perfectly exact*, expresses his astonishment, that, among so simple a people, there should be found a truth, which among the wisest and most learned nations had been sought for in vain.

* See SKETCH III. p. 94.



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“ The proportion of 1250 to 3927, is indeed a near approach to the quadrature of the circle ; it differs little from that of Metius, 113 to 355, and is the same with one equally well known, that of 1 to 3.1416. When found in the simplest and most elementary way, it requires a polygon of 768 sides to be inscribed in a circle ; an operation which cannot be arithmetically performed without the knowledge of some very curious properties of that curve, and at least nine extractions of the square root, each as far as ten places of decimals. All this must have been accomplished in India ; for, it is to be observed, that the above-mentioned proportion cannot have been received from the mathematicians of the west. The Greeks left nothing on this subject more accurate than the theorem of Archimedes ; and the Arabian mathematicians seem not to have attempted any nearer approximation. The geometry of modern Europe can much less be regarded



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garded as the source of this knowledge. Metius and Vieta were the first who, in the quadrature of the circle, surpassed the accuracy of Archimedes; they flourished at the very time when the Institutes of Akbar were collected in India*.”—But the science of the Brahmans was then buried under the ruins of the Hindoo empire.

“ On the grounds which have now been explained the following general conclusions appear to be established.

“ 1st, The observations on which the astronomy of India is founded, were made more than three thousand years before the Christian æra; and, in particular, the places of the sun and moon, at the beginning of the Kaly-Young, were determined by actual observation.

* See Transf. of the R. S. of Edin. vol. ii. p. 185.



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“ This follows from the exact agreement of the radical places in the tables of Tirvalore, with those deduced for the same epoch from the tables of De la Caille and Mayer, and especially in the case of the moon when regard is had to her acceleration. It follows, too, from the position of the fixed stars in respect of the equinox, as represented in the Indian zodiac; from the length of the solar year; and lastly, from the position and form of the orbits of Jupiter and Saturn, as well as their mean motions; in all of which, the tables of the Brahmans, compared with ours, give the quantity of the change that has taken place, just equal to that which the action of the planets on one another may be shewn to have produced, in the space of forty-eight centuries, reckoned back from the beginning of the present.

“ Two other of the elements of this astronomy, the equation of the sun's centre,
and



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and the obliquity of the ecliptic, when compared with those of the present time, seem to point to a period still more remote, and to fix the origin of this astronomy 1,000 or 1200 years earlier; that is, 4,300 years before the Christian æra*: and the time necessary to have brought the arts of calculating and observing to such perfection as they must have attained at the beginning

* That they point to a period more remote than the beginning of the Kaly-Youg, I imagine that the impartial reader will not now deny; but I hope to be excused in saying, that I cannot see any reason for dating the *origin* of the Indian astronomy, at 1000 or 1200 years before that. Perhaps it should rather be said, that the Brahmans, 4,300 years before the Christian æra, must have been in possession of such or such parts of their astronomy. It is possible that materials may yet be found, to enable Mr. Playfair to carry his researches still farther back into antiquity; but probably never to ascertain the origin of a science, which was not delivered ready written, like a book of laws, but begun by looking at the heavens, and improved, through the course, perhaps, of many ages, by observation and experience.



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of the Kaly-Young, comes in support of the same conclusion.

“ Of such high antiquity, therefore, must we suppose the origin of this astronomy, unless we can believe, that all the coincidences which have been enumerated are but the effects of chance ; or, what indeed were still more wonderful, that, some years ago, there had arisen a Newton among the Brahmans, to discover that universal principle, which connects, not only the most distant regions of space, but the most remote periods of duration ; and a De la Grange, to trace, through the immensity of both, its most subtle and complicated operations.

“ 2dly, Though the astronomy that is now in the hands of the Brahmans is so ancient in its origin, yet it contains many rules and tables that are of later construction.

“ The



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“ The first operation for computing the moon’s place from the tables of Tirvalore, requires that 1,600,984 days should be subtracted from the time that has elapsed since the beginning of the Kaly-Young, which brings down the date of the rule to the year 1282 of our æra. At this time, too, the place of the moon, and of her apogee, are determined with so much exactness, that it must have been done by observation, either at the instant referred to, or a few days before or after it. At this time, therefore, it is certain, that astronomical observations were made in India, and that the Brahmans were not, as they are now, without any knowledge of the principles on which their rules were founded. When that knowledge was lost, will not perhaps be easily ascertained*; but there are, I think,
no

* It appears to have been lost, only since the conquest of their country by strangers; from the want of



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no circumstances in the tables from which we can certainly infer the existence of it at a later period than what has just been mentioned; for though there are more modern epochs to be found in them, they are such as may have been derived from the most ancient of all, by help of the mean motions in the tables of Krishna-pouram, without any other skill than is required to an ordinary calculation. Of these epochs, beside what have been occasionally mentioned in the course of our remarks, there is one involved in the tables of Narfapour as late as the year 1656, and another as early as the year 78 of our æra, which marks the death of Salivaganam, one of their princes, in whose reign a reform is said to have taken place in the methods of their astronomy. There is no reference

protection and encouragement, and the effects of persecution and violence. The date seems to prove this.

to

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to any intermediate date from that time to the beginning of the Kaly-Young.

“ The parts of this astronomy, therefore, are not all of the same antiquity ; nor can we judge, merely from the epoch to which the tables refer, of the age to which they were originally adapted. We have seen that the tables of Krishnapouram, though they profess to be no older than the year 1491 of our æra, are in reality more ancient than the tables of Tirvalore, which are dated from the Kaly-Young, or at least have undergone fewer alterations. This we concluded from the slow motion given to the moon in the former of these tables, which agreed, with such wonderful precision, with the secular equation applied to that planet by Mayer, and explained by M. de la Place.

“ But it appears that neither the tables of Tirvalore or Krishnapouram, nor any
with



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with which we are yet acquainted, are the most ancient to be found in India. The Brahmans constantly refer to an astronomy at Benares, which they emphatically style *the ancient*, and which, they say, is not now understood by them, though they believe it to be much more accurate than that by which they now calculate. That it is more accurate, is improbable; that it may be more ancient, no one who has duly attended to the foregoing facts and reasonings, will think impossible; and every one, I believe, will acknowledge, that no greater service could be rendered to the learned world, than to rescue this precious fragment from obscurity. If that is ever to be expected, it is when the zeal for knowledge has formed a literary society among our countrymen at Bengal*, and while

* I am sorry to find, that, so laudable an example has not yet been followed by our countrymen at Madras;



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while that society is directed by the learning and abilities of Sir William Jones.—Indeed, the further discoveries that may be made with respect to this science, do not interest merely the astronomer and mathematician, but every one who delights to mark the progress of mankind, or is curious to look back on the ancient inhabitants of the globe. It is through the medium of astronomy alone, that a few rays from those distant objects can be conveyed in safety to the eye of a modern observer, so as to afford him a light, which, though it be scanty, is pure and unbroken, and free from the false colourings of vanity and superstition.

Madras; for though Mr. Playfair has emphatically, and perhaps properly, called the sites of Benares, and Palibothra, &c. *the classic ground of India*, yet, as the Southern provinces have been less disturbed by foreigners, than the northern countries of Hindostan, were due enquiry to be made, I doubt not but many curious materials would be found in them.

“ 3dly,



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“ 3dly, The basis of the four systems of astronomical tables we have examined, is evidently the same.

“ Though these tables are scattered over an extensive country, they seem to have been all originally adapted to the same meridian, or to meridians at no great distance, which traverse what we may call the classical ground of India, marked by the ruins of Canoge*, Palibothra, and Benares. *They contain rules that have originated between the tropics*; whatever be their epoch, they are all, by their mean motions, connected with that of the Kaly-Young; and they have besides one uniform character, which it is perhaps not easy to describe. Great ingenuity has been exerted to simplify their rules, yet in no instance, almost, are they reduced to the utmost simplicity: and when it happens that the operations to which

* Canoge and Palibothra are the same.

they



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they lead are extremely obvious, these are often involved in an artificial obscurity. A Brahman frequently multiplies by a greater number than is necessary, where he seems to gain nothing but the trouble of dividing by one that is greater in the same proportion; and he calculates the æra of Salivaganam, with the formality of as many distinct operations, as if he were going to determine the moon's motion since the beginning of the Kaly-Youg. The same spirit of exclusion, the same fear of communicating his knowledge, seems to direct the *calculus* which pervades the religion of the Brahman; and in neither of them is he willing to receive or impart instruction. With all these circumstances of resemblance, the methods of this astronomy are as much diversified as we can suppose the same system to be, by passing through the hands of a succession of ingenious men, fertile in resources, and acquainted with the variety and extent of the science which they cultivated.



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tivated.—A system of knowledge which is thus assimilated to the genius of the people, that is diffused so widely among them, and diversified so much, has a right to be regarded, either as a native, or a very ancient inhabitant of the country where it is found.

“ 4thly, The construction of these tables implies a great knowledge of geometry, arithmetic, and even of the *theoretical part* of astronomy, &c.

“ But what, without doubt, is to be accounted the greatest refinement, is the hypothesis employed in calculating the equations of the centre for the sun, moon, and planets; that, viz. of a circular orbit having a double eccentricity, or having its centre in the middle between the earth and the point about which the angular motion is uniform. If to this we add the great extent of geometrical knowledge requisite to combine this, and the other principles of
of



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of their astronomy together, and to deduce from them the just conclusions, the possession of a calculus equivalent to trigonometry; and lastly, their approximation to the quadrature of the circle; we shall be astonished at the magnitude of that body of science, which must have enlightened the inhabitants of India in some remote age, and which, whatever it may have communicated to the western nations, appears to have received nothing from them."

If, therefore, after what has been said, we are obliged to allow that the Hindoos were so far advanced in the science of astronomy, as to make the observations, which they appear to have made, even at the beginning of the Kaly-Youg, about four thousand eight hundred and ninety years ago; or, according to what has been alledged by M. Bailly and Mr. Playfair, 2400, or 1200 years before that period;



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riod; we must necessarily suppose many previous ages, in which they might gradually proceed to that degree of knowledge and refinement, which they must have then enjoyed. The country seems to have been as populous, the nation as powerful, the people as much polished, and arts and learning as far advanced at the *beginning of the Kaly-Youg*, as 4000 years afterwards. But these reflections lead us so far back into the abyss of time, that whilst we are lost in contemplating the past duration of our system, we may be apt to forget the generally received opinions with respect to the creation of the world, and the history of mankind.

I shall conclude this imperfect sketch of the astronomy of the Brahmans, with an extract of a letter from Sir Robert Barker, to the President of the Royal Society of London, read before the Society the 29th

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of May 1777, giving a description of the observatory at Benares*.

However much that ancient and celebrated seminary may have declined from its former splendour, he informs us, that there are still many public foundations and temples, where some thousands of Brahmans yet constantly reside.

“ Having frequently heard that the Brahmans had a knowledge of astronomy,
“ and being confirmed in this by their
“ information of an approaching eclipse,
“ both of the sun and moon, I made inquiry, when at that place in the year
“ 1772, amongst the principal Brahmans, to
“ endeavour to get some information relative to the manner in which they were
“ acquainted with approaching eclipses;
“ but they gave me but little satisfaction.

* See page 94.



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“ I was told, that those matters were con-
“ fined to a few, who were in possession of
“ certain books and records, some contain-
“ ing the mysteries of their religion, and
“ others astronomical tables, written in the
“ Sanskrit language, which scarcely any
“ but those few understand ; that they
“ would, however, take me to a place
“ which had been constructed for the pur-
“ pose of making observations, and from
“ whence they supposed the learned Brah-
“ mans made theirs. I was conducted to
“ an ancient building of stone, the lower
“ part of which, in its present state, served
“ as a stable for horses, and a receptacle
“ for lumber, but, by the number of courts
“ and apartments, it appeared that it must
“ once have been an edifice for the use
“ of some public body. We entered this
“ building, and went up a stair which led
“ to a large terrace on the top of a part of
“ it near to the river Ganges, where, to
“ my surprise and satisfaction, I saw a
“ number



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“ number of instruments yet remaining in
“ the greatest preservation, stupendously
“ large, immovable from the spot, and con-
“ structed of stone, some of them being
“ upwards of twenty feet in height. The
“ execution in the construction of these
“ instruments exhibited a mathematical ex-
“ actness in the fixing, bearing, and fitting,
“ of the several parts. The situation of
“ the two large quadrants of the instru-
“ ments marked A *, whose radius is nine
“ feet two inches, by being at right angles
“ with a gnomon at 25 degrees elevation,
“ are thrown into such an oblique situa-
“ tion, as to render them the most difficult,
“ not only to construct of such a magni-
“ tude, but to secure in their position,
“ and affords a strong proof of the ability
“ of the architect ; for by the shadow of
“ the gnomon thrown on the quadrants,
“ they do not seem to have in the least al-

* See the Plate.



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tered from their original position; and
so true is the line of the gnomon, that,
by applying the eye to a small iron ring
of an inch diameter at one end, the sight
is carried through three others of the
same dimension to the extremity at the
other end, thirty-eight feet eight inches
distant from it, without any obstruc-
tion.

Lieutenant Colonel Archibald Camp-
bell, at that time chief engineer in the
East India Company's service at Bengal,
a gentleman whose abilities do honour to
his profession, made a perspective draw-
ing of the whole of the apparatus that
could be brought within his eye at one
view; but I lament that he could not re-
present some very large quadrants, whose
radii were about twenty feet, they being
on the side from whence he took his
drawing. They are exact quarters of
circles of different radii, the largest of
which



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“ which I judged to be twenty feet, con-
“ structed very exactly on the sides of
“ stone walls built perpendicular, and situ-
“ ated, I suppose, in the meridian of the
“ place; a brass pin is fixed at the centre,
“ or angle, of the quadrant, from whence,
“ a Brahman informed me, they stretched a
“ wire to the circumference when an ob-
“ servation was to be made; from which
“ it occurred to me, the observer must
“ have moved his eye up or down the cir-
“ cumference by means of a ladder, or
“ some such contrivance, to raise and lower
“ himself until he had discovered the alti-
“ tude of the heavenly bodies in their pas-
“ sage over the meridian, so expressed on
“ the arcs of those quadrants; these arcs
“ are very exactly divided into nine large
“ sections, each of them is again divided
“ into ten, making ninety lesser divisions,
“ or degrees, and these into twenty, ex-
“ pressing three minutes each, of about
“ two tenths of an inch asunder; so it is

A a 3

“ possible



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“ possible they had some method of again
“ dividing these into more minute parts at
“ the time of observation.

“ My time would only permit me to
“ take down the particular dimensions of
“ the most capital instrument, or the
“ greater equinoctial sun-dial, represented by
“ figure A, (see the Plate,) which appears to
“ be an instrument to express solar time
“ by the shadow of a gnomon upon two
“ quadrants, one situated to the east, and
“ the other to the west of it; and indeed
“ the chief part of their instruments at this
“ place appear to be constructed for the
“ same purpose, except the quadrants and
“ an instrument in brass, that will be de-
“ scribed hereafter.

“ Figure B is another instrument for de-
“ termining the exact hour of the day, by
“ the shadow of a gnomon, which stands
“ perpendicular to, and in the centre of,
“ a flat



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“ a flat circular stone, supported in an
“ oblique situation by means of four up-
“ right stones and a cross-piece; so that
“ the shadow of the gnomon, which is a
“ perpendicular iron rod, is thrown upon
“ the divisions of the circle described on
“ the face of the flat circular stone.

“ Figure C is a brass circle, about two
“ feet diameter, moving vertically upon
“ two pivots between two stone pillars,
“ having an index, or hand, turning round
“ horizontally on the centre of this circle,
“ which is divided into three hundred and
“ sixty parts; but there are no counter-
“ divisions on the index to subdivide those
“ on the circle. The instrument appears
“ to be made for taking the angle of a
“ star at setting or rising, or for taking the
“ azimuth or amplitude of the sun at set-
“ ting or rising.

“ The use of the instrument, figure D,
“ I was at a loss to account for. It consists
“ of



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“ of two circular walls, the outer of which
“ is about forty feet diameter and eight
“ high, the wall within about half that
“ height, and appears intended as a place
“ to stand on to observe the divisions on
“ the upper circle of the outer wall, rather
“ than for any other purpose; and yet
“ both circles are divided into three hun-
“ dred and sixty degrees, each degree being
“ subdivided into twenty lesser divisions,
“ the same as the quadrants. There is a
“ door-way to pass into the inner circle,
“ and a pillar in the centre of that, of the
“ same height with the lower circle, and
“ having a hole in it which seems to be a
“ socket for an iron rod to be placed per-
“ pendicular. The divisions on these circles,
“ as well as on all the other instruments,
“ will bear a nice examination with a pair
“ of compasses.

“ Figure E is a small equinoctial sun-
“ dial, constructed on the same principle as
“ the large one A.”

Mr.



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Mr. Call, member of the Royal Society, and formerly chief engineer on the coast of Coromandel, in a letter to the Astronomer Royal, to be found in the Philosophical Transactions of 1772, says, that he discovered the signs of the zodiac on the cieling of a choultry at Verdapetah, in the province of Madura, near Cape Comorin; that he found them on the cieling of a temple that stands in the middle of a tank, before the pagoda of Teppicolum; and that he had often met with several parts of the zodiac in detached pieces.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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